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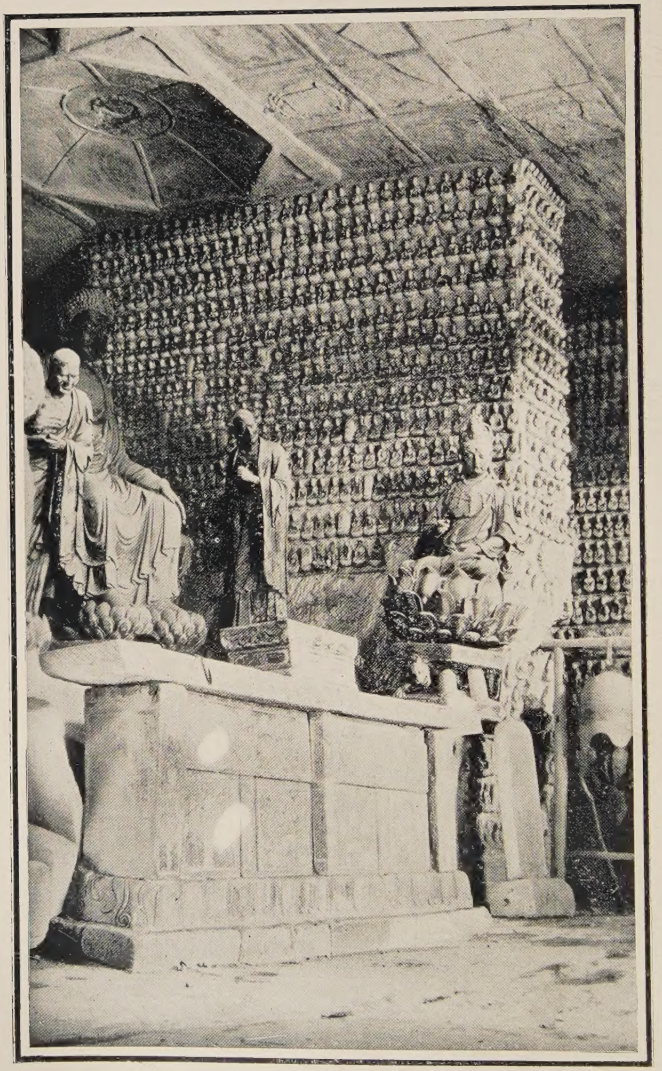

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

SECTION OF THE "CAVE OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS"
FOUNDED 936 A.D.

Note the small figures of Buddha in the background. These are all carved out of the solid rock, and the cave contains considerably more than ten thousand of them.

Mandarin & Missionary in Cathay

THE STORY OF TWELVE YEARS' STRENUOUS MISSIONARY WORK DURING STIRRING TIMES MAINLY SPENT IN YENANFU, A PREFECTURAL CITY OF SHENSI, NORTH CHINA, WITH A REVIEW OF ITS HISTORY FROM THE EARLIEST DATE

BY

ERNEST F. BORST-SMITH, F.R.G.S.

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To

THE MEMORY

OF

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PREFACE

THE missionary on deputation work rarely has an opportunity of fully telling his story. Much of the time even of the Annual Missionary Meeting is taken up with things that are local. I seldom uttered a sentence at a missionary gathering that was not an example of "the struggle for existence," though I cannot hope to have equally exemplified "the survival of the fittest." There was always a wide margin of knowledge which could not, under the conditions, be imparted, but which it was desirable for the intelligent supporter of missions to acquire. The text required a context. I therefore send this volume forth on a mission of wider deputation, trusting it may reach many whom the spoken address could not, and convey a fuller message than the time limits of any public meeting would allow.

I have not hesitated to include many things seemingly secular, since the sacred cause on which they bear sanctifies them all. And I have throughout been desirous of preserving the balance by giving *problems* as well as *prospects* their share of space. For the missionary book, as for the missionary meeting, there is one proper petition—"Let knowledge grow from more to more."

My story claims to be that of Yenanfu only, but it will, I trust, throw light on much that is characteristically Chinese. I have tried to exclude alike all that is *not* local, and all that is *merely* local. Of the former I could not speak with authority, nor of the latter with profit. I have aimed at showing the whole in the part, rather than a part of the whole. Thoroughly to know Yenanfu will be to know much more; and therefore the knowledge is worth while. I have used the word Yenanfu with its Chinese meaning—viz. (1) the city of that name; (2) the area governed by it. This area has of late been gradually circumscribed, but during most of the centuries here reviewed Yenanfu may be regarded as a synonym for North Shensi.

For Part I. I have had two main sources. While reading again for the third time Dr F. L. Hawks Potts' concise but invaluable book, *A Sketch of Chinese History*,[1] I was struck with the fact that many of the fierce struggles that have marked the long centuries of Chinese history must have been waged around this very area. Conversation with local people confirmed the impression that Yenanfu had had a romantic past. But is it ever given to local people without the stimulus of visitors from a distance to know much of the history of their own city? The conviction grew that, consciously or unconsciously, one "kicked up history at every step." I was then fortunate enough, through the courtesy of the Yamen staff, to obtain access to the ancient annals of the Prefecture, and Part I. is

[1] Kelly & Walsh Ltd., Shanghai.

formed out of the material common to these, and to Dr Hawks Potts' history. My indebtedness to Dr Potts is far greater than any number of inverted commas can possibly indicate, and I gratefully acknowledge it.

My investigations led to a humility akin to awe. We were living in a place which had an almost timeless past, which was intimately involved in nearly all of the great movements of Chinese civilisation, and in some even of world-wide significance. Then with knowledge, reverence also grew.

It became evident that whatever share we might be privileged to have in the *future* of Yenanfu, its history would not *begin* with us ; some of it was already ancient in the days of Abraham. We were the last, and surely the least, of an almost endless procession of varied visitors. How could we expect Yenanfu to take us seriously ?

And so I have tried to place the missionary story in its historical sequence, and to look at it in perspective. In the Divine economy we find first that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. And it was " in the fulness of time " that the Gospel came.

I am not without hope that Parts II. and III. may throw some light on such important missionary questions as : Self-support ; self-control ; the relation of foreign missionary to Chinese helper ; the character and ability of the latter ; the bearing of the change of government on the Church ; and while I completely lack the qualifications for carrying out Dr Clifford's suggestion to me, to produce a work that could be

entitled *Thinking Yellow*, I sincerely hope that the present volume will lead readers to some further knowledge of this entrancingly interesting land, at this critical period of its history.

It may not be without interest to add that the activity of the famous Chinese brigand, the White Wolf, has directed much public attention to the province of Shensi. And the alliance that the Peking Government has entered into with an American Oil Company for the exploitation of oil-fields has still further focussed attention to North Shensi, the scene of these sketches. An ex-premier of the republic has been appointed Director-General of Oilfields; machinery worth £250,000 has been sent into the neighbourhood; and American experts have already arrived and have commenced explorations. These facts may give added interest to, and further justify the publication of, these sketches.

The return to a monarchial form of government and the subsequent reversion to a republic may seem to make occasional references in the text "out of date." In spite of this, however, I have decided to leave these unaltered, as they recorded impressions of the time when they were written, and I am more anxious to communicate what I *saw* than to give the impression of what I *foresaw*. The change is almost entirely a matter of nomenclature. The experience and general characteristics of the Chinese being what they are, it is inevitable that during these years of transition the government (under whatever *name*) will be largely

autocratic. And most keen observers, to whatever political school they may be political adherents, will agree that this is well.

One natural and largely entertained objection to the change of name when Yuan Shih Kai became emperor was that malcontents might take advantage of it to stir up strife and so plunge parts of the country in bloodshed. And as will be seen from one of the later chapters, Yenanfu and its environs were the scene of much lawlessness at that period. But apart from this synchronism, there was no other connection between the monarchial movement and the marauding mutiny. It was upon the presumed indifference of the overwhelming majority of the people of China to any and all theories of government that the so-called monarchial clique in Peking relied when urging Yuan Shih Kai—and how far they acted upon Yuan's own instigations can never be known—to accept the throne of China.

I am indebted to my brother, Mr H. B. Smith, F.C.I.S., for undertaking all the detailed work in connection with the publication of this book.

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Mandarin & Missionary in Cathay

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

THE REMOTE PAST: A RAPID REVIEW OF TWO MILLENNIUMS

THE word YEN-AN-FU means Permanent Peace Prefecture,[1] and it would be beyond human genius to devise a name which so perfectly expresses the direct opposite of the historical truth. The idea in the first syllable is that of a long period of time, and as some Chinese words are very elastic in their meaning, it seemed legitimate to translate it, as is often done, by "delayed" or some such word. Indeed *Postponed* Peace Prefecture would seem at once a good rendering of the Chinese words, and an expression of the simple truth. But there is unmistakable authority for believing that "Permanent" is the meaning intended by those who instituted the name.

[1] The Prefecture which may be identified by the suffix "Fu" is the division larger than the County, but smaller than the Province. The relationship may be stated thus: ten Counties equal one Prefecture; seven Prefectures equal one Province.

By the courtesy of the local " Yamen " staff I have had access to the archives of the city ; but my investigation has brought to light nothing that is permanent, and little that is peaceful.

The *latest* entries in these ancient annals were made in the eighteenth year of the reign of the illustrious Kanghei (*i.e.* 1680), by far the greatest and one of the earliest emperors of the Manchu dynasty that has just passed away. The reason these records are not more up to date is that it is not customary (or safe !) to review the events of any dynasty while it is still in power. It is only after it has been superseded that freedom is felt to survey the period with impartiality.

The ten volumes which comprise these annals are printed from wooden blocks, twelve inches long, eight inches wide and an inch thick, on the usual flimsy paper used for Chinese books. They are in the Wenli or literary style, which can be understood throughout the whole of China, while the characters do not differ in any way from those common to-day. It is the work of a certain department in every Yamen to prepare and keep records of current events ready for printing. It is usual to publish a small edition to permit of presentation copies being sent to neighbouring counties and prefectures, as well as to the capital ; and also for distribution among the local gentry.

The *earliest* entries go back to the remotest antiquity, and refer to the period of the mythical Emperor Fu Hai, whose reign is supposed to have begun in the year 2852 B.C. Yenanfu was then on

the boundary line of Ancient China, which was at that time about one-tenth of the size of to-day's eighteen provinces.

Just outside one of the North Shensi towns (Chung Pu), which till recently was comprised within the Yenanfu prefectural area, is the tomb of the Emperor Hwang Ti, who established his capital in Shensi in the year 2697 B.C. He is perhaps the most renowned of all the Chinese emperors, as was illustrated by the fact that in the earlier days of the recent revolution all who sympathised with the movement dated their letters Hwang Ti 4609th year, instead of Hsnen T'ung 4th year. The purpose of this was to appeal to the conservative instincts of the masses of China by connecting the revolution with the most illustrious of the heroes of the past.

At the time of Yao and Shun, whose reigns (2356–2205 B.C.) mark the Golden Age in Chinese history, Yenanfu was one of the main gateways from the Ordos Desert into China, to keep which could not have been peaceful work, while in the twenty-third century B.C. it was the geographical centre of Yung Chou, one of the nine sections into which the whole Empire was divided.

Passing over ten centuries, during much of which Yenanfu was engaged in conflict, with varying results, with savage tribes to whom more frequent reference will yet be made, we come to the beginning of the thirteenth century B.C. At this time a new foe appeared—viz. the Tartars. Toward the end of that century a fierce but successful conflict was waged with them, and for a time

they were vanquished. This encounter is memorable as the beginning of the long, intermittent struggle between the Chinese and the Tartars, which lasted so many centuries and finally resulted in the conquest of China by the Tartars, the ancestors of the Manchus of to-day. Throughout all these hundreds of years Yenanfu was involved in the struggle. Indeed it is hardly too much to claim that in some real sense the history of Yenanfu was the history of China in miniature. It is certainly well within the truth to say that knowledge of this one section will throw considerable light on the whole subject.

When in the twelfth century the rule of the great tribal chieftains began to develop into that of emperor, it was the chieftain of the principality of Chou, in Shensi, who became emperor. And although the capital was removed from Sianfu, in Shensi, to Honanfu, the centre of interest was still Shensi. For during the time of great confusion which marked the latter part of the Chou dynasty the state of Ch'in, in Shensi, secured a leading position. The chief reason for this was that it was subject to constant attacks from the wild Tartar tribes who sought an entrance into the Empire through the Yenanfu pass, and Ch'in therefore had to keep a large standing army in the field, with the result that it became possessed of great military strength. The independent spirit of the Duke of Ch'in was displayed by his building an altar to Shang Ti (God) and offering the sacrifices that the emperor alone, as representative of the whole nation, had the right to offer. Gradually

this state obtained control over the other feudatory states and became the foremost rival of the Central Government.

The last emperor of the Chou dynasty (314 B.C.), fearing for his own safety, formed a league with many of the chief nobles against the state of Ch'in. But its powerful duke, regarding offence as the best method of defence, advanced with his army into the territory of his suzerain, whose forces he attacked and captured. He compelled the emperor to beg on his knees for mercy and to surrender a large part of his possessions. For a time the Duke of Ch'in permitted a representative of the Chou dynasty to exercise nominal rule over the eastern part of the Empire; but the real power was in his own hands, and it was not long before the Chou dynasty came to an end. The Duke of Ch'in, who thus virtually exercised the power of the emperor, did not, however, at first actually assume the Imperial insignia.

It is interesting to note that the leaders of the revolution in Shensi in A.D. 1911, anxious to appeal to the constitutional conservatism of the masses of the people, not only altered the date of that year 1911 to Hwang Ti 4609th year, as already stated, but changed the name of Shensi to Ch'in, thus claiming that so far from breaking with the past, they were reverting to a really remote past. The proclamations demanding our protection, which I still possess, are all marked Ch'in, not Shensi.

CHAPTER II

THE NAPOLEON OF CHINA, AND WHY HE BUILT THE GREAT WALL

IN the year 221 B.C. Ch'in Shih Hwang, or Shih Hwang Ti, ascended the throne. The word "Shih" means first, and indicates that he regarded himself as the first real emperor of the whole of China. On account of his extended conquests he has sometimes been called the Napoleon of China.

The dynasty he established is known as the Ch'in, from which the word "China" is probably derived. The first Westerners who became acquainted with China spoke of the Chinese as the people of Ch'in.

Ch'in Shih Hwang established his capital near the modern city of Sianfu, in Shensi, which has been described as "the Holy City of China." Although he was only thirteen years of age when he ascended the throne, he soon showed that he was possessed of remarkable capacity and strength of character. Perceiving that the feudal system was a constant source of weakness to the Empire, and a constant menace to the Imperial prerogative, he determined to abolish it. The principal means that he adopted—and for this his reign will be for ever memorable—was to destroy all classical literature and to kill the *literati*.

The real reason for his dislike of scholars was their conservatism, which caused them to throw the entire weight of their influence against all the emperor's reforms. They were always recalling the "Golden Days" of antiquity, and pointing out the vast superiority of the past. The emperor, anxious to blot out the claims of antiquity, and *to make Chinese history begin with himself*, issued an edict ordering all the existing literature, except works on astrology, divination, medicine and husbandry to be collected and burnt. It must have been a very difficult decree to enforce, and undoubtedly many books were concealed and saved. When the emperor learnt that some of the scholars had used treasonable language regarding this order, he condemned four hundred and sixty of them to death, to serve as a salutary warning to others. According to tradition, these men were buried alive. For this action Ch'in Shih Hwang has been regarded by the Chinese, whose reverence for literature and the *literati* is proverbial, as a most impious tyrant. And there is still current an epigrammatic "four-character phrase" which characterises his crime—viz. "Burned books, buried bookmen." His motive, that of obliterating the feudal system from the memory of China, has perhaps not been fully appreciated, and it must be remembered that it was not on account of the method of his cruelty, but because it was directed against the scholars, that the Chinese denounce his action.

With great zeal he exerted himself to advance the material prosperity of the country. Roads were built

in all directions, and rivers hitherto impassable were spanned by bridges. In the course of one of his extensive tours he went from his capital in Sianfu to Taiyuanfu, returning via Yenanfu. It was when he was on a second journey over the same route that he died.

During the whole of this period Yenanfu and its surrounding country was the scene of constant incursions of wild Tartar tribes, who have "recently been identified beyond question with the Huns,"[1] who under Atilla in A.D. 445 became the scourge of Europe, and were the ancestors of the Turks. Of them Dr Hawks Potts says: "They were a nomadic people, and spent most of their time on horseback, saying that their country was the backs of their horses. They moved from place to place with their flocks and herds, always in search of fresh pastures. Horses, cattle and sheep were their usual possessions, but they occasionally had camels, asses, mules, and other peculiar breeds of the equine family. They had no cities or towns, but a certain portion of their territory passed over in their migrations was designed to each tribe, each tent or household being allotted a piece of land for its exclusive use. They were uncultured and had no written language. Their children, when mere babies, were taught to ride on the backs of sheep, and to shoot small animals and birds with little bows and arrows; and as they grew older they practised their skill on foxes and larger animals. They fed upon flesh and milk, and used the skins of animals for clothing. They always fought

[1] *The Civilisation of China*, by H. A. Giles, pp. 28–29.

Photo by *F. A. Herald, Esq., M.Sc.*

THE TOWN OF SUITECHOU, NORTH SHENSI

X Marks the tomb of Meng Tien, the general in charge of the building of the great wall of China.

Photo by *R. S. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

A MEMORIAL ARCH IN CARVED STONE

Erected to the memory of a person of note.

on horseback, throwing their enemies into confusion by advancing against them with their horses at full speed."

During the early part of the reign of Ch'in Shih Hwang Yenanfu was ruled over by a king of one of these wild Tartar tribes named Tung I., whose throne was in our neighbouring town of Fu Chow, to which we shall have occasion to refer later.

In his thirty-second year the emperor sent one of the greatest of the generals, a man named Meng Tien, to commence operations on what has since been known as the Great Wall of China, and which has been regarded as one of the wonders of the world. The wall was about 1800 miles long, 22 feet high and 30 feet wide. At intervals of 100 yards were towers 40 feet high, and though now in ruins, it still forms the boundary between the Yenanfu prefecture and Mongolia. Even before the time of Ch'in Shih Hwang walls had been constructed on the northern frontier, but these were now united and their fortifications strengthened and improved.

For the execution of his great task General Meng Tien made his home and headquarters at Yenanfu, whence he governed the forty-four counties into which North Shensi was then divided, and his tomb can still be seen within the city of Suitechou.

For some unknown reason Ch'in Shih Hwang was unwilling for his eldest son, Fu Su, to succeed him. He therefore appointed his youngest son as his heir, while he sent Fu Su to Yenanfu on one of the campaigns against the Tartars, and his tomb also may still be seen.

The Ch'in dynasty, instituted by Ch'in Shih Hwang, was short-lived, only lasting fifty years. Yet its significance in Chinese history is great, for it succeeded in consolidating the feudal states into one Empire. And although this combination was only temporary, it was long enough to make possible a further course of conquest and to present a determined front to the increasingly serious incursions of the barbarous tribes on the boundaries of Yenanfu.

In the Han dynasty (208 B.C. to A.D. 25), which followed the Ch'in, the capital of the Empire was still at Sianfu, in Shensi. This spot was settled upon because the emperor desired to be in a position where he could watch the movements of the Huns, whose inroads from thence began to assume still more serious proportions. At this time it would appear from our records that the Tartar king, Tung I., recaptured Yenanfu and re-established his throne in the neighbourhood. Later a great duke, named Ting Li Hou, doubtless sent to expel the Tartar, made his residence here.

Chinese history records an attempt made in the second century B.C. to destroy the Huns by a clever ruse. They were invited to take possession of a border city—almost certainly one of the forty county towns governed by Yenanfu. The plan of the emperor was to entice the barbarian chieftain with his whole army into an ambuscade. In the neighbourhood of this city a large Chinese force was concealed, with instructions to fall upon the enemy as soon as they had entered the trap. The Tartar chieftain, greedy for expected wealth,

nibbled at the bait, and with a hundred thousand men passed through the Great Wall, and advanced to a place thirty miles distant from that which he was invited to occupy. On the march, however, he noticed many herds of cattle grazing in the fields without any keepers, and this unusual sight aroused his suspicions. Fearing false play, he promptly retired from the dangerous position, and, returning to his own borders, frustrated the plot. The Tartars were most indignant at this intended treachery and took vengeance on the Chinese by further incursions into the northern border of the Empire.

Another important event of this period was the removal of a Tartar tribe called the Yu Ti from their ancient seat, which was slightly west of Yenanfu to the farther west. They were forced to this migration on account of being molested by the frequent attacks of the other and far stronger Tartar tribe, the Huns. This was really " the beginning of the great Western movement of the Tartars which continued for so many centuries, and which had such disastrous consequences for the countries of Eastern Europe. This tribe settled in the country now called Bokhara, and remained there until, many years later, they were gathered up in the great Western march of the Huns, and hurled in conjunction with them on the Roman Empire." [1]

[1] Hawks Potts' *Sketch of Chinese History*, p. 39.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF BUDDHISM—THE CAVE OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS

THE romance of the entrance of Buddhism into China is well known. A Chinese emperor of A.D. 62 had a dream, in which he was advised to send messengers in the direction of the setting sun, where, if they continued their journey far enough, they would find a religion that would bring great happiness to China. The emperor, "not disobedient to the heavenly vision," selected suitable messengers, and instructed them to proceed westwards from the then capital of China (the present Sianfu, in Shensi), and not to return until they had brought back with them the new faith of his dream.

The men travelled on until at last they reached India, and when they saw the great cities of that land, and the gorgeous religious ritual in use throughout it, they naturally concluded that they had reached their goal, and that in Buddhism the emperor would find the realisation of his dream.

This is another of the innumerable examples to be found in Chinese history of "arrested progress." The messengers went far, but not far enough. The good, as so often happens, proved the enemy of the best. Would

that they had still pursued their journey in the direction of the setting sun. They would have arrived, as did the Magi a few years earlier, at the place where the fullest revelation was to be found.

Their conclusion, however, was natural enough, and they returned to Shensi with a number of Buddhist priests and a large selection of sacred literature for the Court of the sovereign. From that time Buddhism became one of the recognised religions of the Celestial Empire.

It would probably not take long for the new faith to cover the two hundred miles that divided the Imperial capital from the city of Yenanfu. In any case, within three hundred yards of the spot where these words are being written, and in full view, is a sacred mountain which gives unmistakable evidence that this was once one of the very strongholds of Buddhism.

It is quite possible, however, that Buddhism came to Yenanfu much earlier than it did to the capital. For there has always been a strong Mongolian influence here. Indeed the main work of Yenanfu, through the long centuries of Chinese history, has been to guard one of the gates into the Empire against Mongol incursions. Again and again it has been occupied by various tribes, until for a time they have been driven out again by Imperial forces. It is not impossible that it was the Mongols or Tartars who were the cause of the introduction of Buddhism into the Yenanfu end of the Empire. For Chinese history records that in the time of the Emperor Wu Ti (140 B.C.) a golden image, supposed

to be an image of Buddha, had been taken with other plunder from the Huns, and about that time some Hindu missionaries had found their way into China.

The principal temple on the sacred hill at Yenanfu is called the "Cave of Ten Thousand Buddhas." It is a masterpiece of human workmanship. The supposition is that the cave was originally made as the result of excavations of stone for building purposes, probably for the erection of the city wall.

Facing you as you enter are three Buddhas, and one of the first things to impress you is how un-Chinese-like are the figures, in both features and dress. And then around the walls, and carved out of the solid sandstone, are innumerable small images of Buddha. How many, no one here has had sufficient industry to count. There are certainly vastly more than ten thousand. That number is seldom used with mathematical accuracy; it is a synonym for innumerable. And every one of them is an actual part of the mountain itself.

This temple, which may have been superintended by priests from India, baffles all attempt at description. It must have taken innumerable skilled workers many years to complete. It would surely be no exaggeration to say of it, as was said of another temple, "Forty and six years was this temple in building."

There seems now to be no method of discovering the facts about any Hindu missionaries who actually lived here. The present-day priests are usually mere caretakers of the temples, and can seldom read or

write. The ancient records have most likely been lost.

But the hero of the sacred hill is a Buddha named Sï Bi. His name is carved on numerous inscriptions and his is the very central figure as you enter the wonderful cave. As to who he originally was, theories are conflicting. He is almost invariably referred to as King Sï Bi. Some say he was an Indian king who, like the great founder of Buddhism, renounced his throne and retired to the secluded monastery. Others think he was a Mongolian chieftain. But, whoever he was, it is certain that many hundreds of years ago he lived on this mountain the life of a recluse, and all the grandeur of this ancient Buddhist stronghold is somehow associated with him.

One of the popular stories about him, and this is preserved on many of the inscriptions just referred to, is that one day a pigeon pursued by an eagle, and having no other refuge, flew into the folds of his dress and hid itself. King Sï Bi not only preserved the life of the pigeon, but was also magnanimous in his treatment of its pursuer, for he cut a piece of flesh off his own arm and gave it to the eagle. The memory of this is still preserved in the name of the local county ; and some account of this double act of kindness is inscribed on many a tablet, and is referred to in the ancient official documents of the city.

The sacred mountain was reglorified during the Ming dynasty, which lasted from A.D. 1368 to 1644. That dynasty, as will be recorded later, was overthrown by a rebellion led by two men from this very district in

North Shensi (for the Manchus were only a third party and took advantage of the civil war), but the rebellion and consequent change of dynasty did nothing to diminish the splendour of Buddhism in Yenanfu. And we learn from numerous stone tablets that during the reigns of the earlier and really illustrious emperors of the Manchu dynasty that has just passed away still further additions and improvements were made.

It is significant that the two great iconoclastic rebellions of recent Chinese history that harassed the Empire for nearly fifty years left the sacred mountain undestroyed. The Tai-ping Rebellion, with its violent propaganda against all forms of idolatry, was a kind of miniature Mohammedanism. Later in the very same year (1866) that its army passed through North Shensi plundering and killing, the Mohammedans came, completing the destruction and depopulation of the whole area. Yenanfu must then have been well garrisoned to preserve itself and its sacred mountain.

But it is only the fabric that has survived. The life of Buddhism seems now to have expired. Its priests are illiterate, their knowledge being confined to the performance of certain religious rites. They gain an uncertain livelihood by chanting prayers at weddings and funerals.

There, however, still stands the mountain with its Cave of Ten Thousand Buddhas, an unmistakable proof of a once glorious past. And it suggests the question: What evidence will posterity be able to discover of the fact that we too have been here?

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

GODDESS OF A THOUSAND HANDS AND EYES

The number is not mathematically correct, in this case far exceeding the truth. Note an eye in the palm of each hand, also sticks of incense in front. These figures are made of plaster built on a lath or bamboo frame. They are highly coloured and usually—to the Western mind—hideous.

CHAPTER IV

CONFLICT AND COMMINGLING OF CHINESE AND TARTARS: A SWIFT SURVEY—A.D. 300–1640.

THE constantly changing fortunes of the border war between Chinese and Tartars could not otherwise than cause a certain commingling of Chinese and Tartar blood, especially in areas such as Yenanfu, which was so situated as to be always involved in these centuries of conflict.

This is the most probable explanation of that difference of which we become conscious between the type of character of North Shensi and that of the south of the province. The difference, which is all to the credit of the north, and shows itself in less polish, though more sincerity, is greater than the mere distance which separates the areas would lead one to expect.

For the first famous instance of this commingling we have to go back several centuries to a well-known incident in Chinese history. As long ago as 200 B.C. an immense army of Huns, under a chief named Mao-tun (the ancestor of a Tartar king who some centuries later died while defending Yenanfu), skirted the western end of the Great Wall, and made an invasion into Chinese territory, and carried off a large quantity of booty. The emperor himself led an army to resist the Huns, but

he was compelled to retreat to a city in Shensi, where he was besieged. Reduced to extremity, the emperor, acting on "the advice of his ministers," resorted to the following ruse. He instructed an artist to draw the picture of a beautiful maiden, and then sent it by a reliable messenger to the wife of Mao-tun, who had accompanied the expedition, with the message that it was a portrait of a famous beauty about to be presented to her husband. Mao-tun's wife, actuated by jealousy, persuaded him to raise the siege and withdraw into his own territory. A few years later the Huns made another invasion, and this time the emperor was compelled to carry out his own suggestion of buying off Mao-tun by giving him as a consort one of the beauties of his harem, pretending it was his daughter.

In later centuries this precedent was frequently followed, Chinese princesses often being presented to the Tartar chieftains as consorts whenever truces were made. Consequently early in the fourth century A.D. Tartar chiefs, with much show of justice, claimed the possession of Imperial blood in their veins, making them eligible heirs to the Dragon Throne. One of the descendants of Mao-tun, Liu Yuan, a Tartar chieftain with a strain of Chinese blood, took advantage of the incapacity of the reigning emperor, gathered a force of fifty thousand men, and styled himself the Prince of Han. After this the Huns reigned supreme in the north of China for sixty years. "This temporary seizure of power by the less civilised and more

warlike tribes of the north was but the prelude to the final complete domination of the Empire by the Tartars."

By the middle of the fifth century A.D. we find Yenanfu to be one of the chief strongholds of a descendant of these two Tartar chieftains, Mao-tun and Liu Yuan. This man, Heilienpopo, was the founder of the kingdom of Hsia, one of the most important of the many small Tartar kingdoms into which the north of China was then divided.

Our local records inform us that it was Heilienpopo who originally established the present city of Yenanfu as such, and made it the centre for his further conquests, although his capital was the present city of Ning Hsia, on the boundary of North-West Shensi and North-East Kansuh. In the course of his numerous campaigns it appears that even Sianfu came for a time within his sway. The war which, after his reign of nineteen years, finally overthrew him was waged in and around Yenanfu, and it was here that he died, his tomb being two miles to the south of our city. The kingdom by which he was defeated was that of Wei, the most powerful of all the northern Tartar kingdoms. Thus while Yenanfu changed its individual ruler it still remained under Tartar government.

The important feature of this period of the history of China is the constant struggle between the Chinese in the south and the various tribes of Tartars in the north. A parallel is to be found in the conquest of the Roman Empire by the Teutonic tribes, who first annexed the

north of the Empire and afterwards proceeded to its complete conquest.

Although at first the Tartars were a rude and barbarous people, yet after they entered Chinese territory they accepted the superior civilisation of the conquered Chinese, adding nothing to it. They studied the Confucian classics, and were also influenced by Buddhism and Taoism, just as the Teutonic conquerors of the Western Roman Empire adopted the Roman religion and civilisation.

Passing over two centuries of varying fortunes, we find North Shensi the home of a new Tartar tribe, the Khitans, who began to ravage and plunder. The word Cathay, which in the Middle Ages was generally used in Europe as the name of China, is derived from this tribe, and the old name is still preserved, as all travellers on the Trans-Siberian Railway are aware, in the Russian word for China, which is K'itai.

In the course of the two hundred years during which the Khitans preserved their identity, they removed from North Shensi, finally settling in the Liao Tung peninsula in the north-east corner of the Empire. Their frequent incursions formed one of the principal causes contributing to the decline of the Tang dynasty, which was in power during one of the most glorious periods of Chinese history.

But the removal of one Tartar tribe from the vicinity of North Shensi did not leave it without Tartar neighbours. In A.D. 765 a serious rebellion was headed by a general of Hun descent, and during its

progress the capital (Sianfu) was captured from the Imperial forces. In his extremity the emperor called on yet another Tartar tribe (the Ouigars) to help to suppress it, and offered a liberal reward. They consented, and one of the consequences was the great increase of their cupidity ; and this " prepared for the day when they would no longer be content to act as mercenaries, but knowing their own strength, would attempt to seize the Empire for themselves."

It may have been in the course of this rebellion that Yenanfu was the centre of a small kingdom. Our local records state that at some part of this period a man named Fen (the twenty-second son of the Emperor Yuan Ti) was appointed King of Yenan.

It was probably after he was defeated in A.D. 900 that the city was rebuilt. On a hill just outside the South Gate there remains in good condition a nine-storeyed pagoda built in that year, and a bell erected at the same time, though the same belfry has had to be frequently restored.

We come now to the middle of the eleventh century. The Khitans have long since removed from the neighbourhood of Yenanfu, and their power even in Liao Tung is on the wane. But our neighbourhood now supplies the Empire with a new foe—viz. the kingdom of Hsia. We have already given some account of a kingdom of that name six centuries earlier, and recorded the fact that its founder, King Heilienpopo, established Yenanfu as a city, and is buried near by. The fact that this new kingdom of Hsia occupied the same area

will naturally suggest either that it was never completely defeated or else that a new tribe revived the old name. The latter is a very frequent practice with leaders of Chinese rebellions, as is shown by the fact that here are several recognised dynasties with the same title. In fact there has hardly ever been any rising in China, great or small, which has not borrowed its title from the past, and thus made some appeal to the Chinese habit of looking backwards for all that is good. The ruler of this new kingdom of Hsia, Chao Yuan Hao, alias Li Yuan Hao, was an ambitious warrior, and claiming, as did his ancestors, Heilienpopo and Liu Yuan, before him, to be a descendant of the Imperial line, he arrogated to himself the title of Emperor. Gathering a force of one hundred and fifty thousand fighting men, he began to encroach on the territory of the emperor, who was utterly incompetent to make any adequate defence. The emperor was obliged to make terms, and to agree to pay an annual subsidy in gold and silver, and a large number of rolls of silk.

At that time Yenanfu was occupied in the Imperial interest by two famous generals, Fan Chung Yien and Han Chi, and it was only owing to their prowess that Chao Yuan Hao did not succeed in becoming emperor.

The former of these had already rebuilt this city, doubtless damaged by the various campaigns conducted in its vicinity. Fan Chung Yien not only succeeded in keeping the Yenanfu city and pass, but also carried the campaign far into the enemy's area. And it was popularly said in Chao Yuan Hao's camp that whenever the

name Fan was seen on a flag (flags always have the name of the general in one large character) the soldiers of the Hsia kingdom took fright.

The courage and success of General Fan postponed the date of the fall of the dynasty. It was owing to the fact that the Khitans of the north-east and the kingdom of Hsia of the north-west had combined their forces against him that the emperor entered into the terms already referred to. Had he had more generals of the character of Fan and Han he could have defied Chao Yuan Hao.

In the east suburb there still stands a temple erected by the Yenanfu people to the honour of Generals Fan and Han, and sacrifices are periodically offered before their images.

The kingdom of Hsia lasted on for a hundred and fifty years and was finally overthrown by Genghis Khan, who, says Dr Hawks Pott, "may rightly be considered one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever seen, and may justly be ranked with Alexander the Great, Hannibal and Julius Cæsar."

The armies of Genghis Khan overran the whole area, as afterwards did those of Kublai Khan, "who was ruler over a more extensive domain than had ever before acknowledged the sway of any one man."

The Yuan dynasty, established by Genghis Khan, was of short duration, lasting less than ninety years. After the death of Kublai Khan in 1294, as has often been the case with the world's greatest men no one was found capable of preserving what had been acquired.

Gradually the Mongols became assimilated with the Chinese, and as they came more completely under the influence of Chinese civilisation they lost much of their original martial vigour, and their own identity disappeared in " the sea that salts all the waters that flow into it."

In 1388 a Chinese dynasty—the Ming—was again established, under the successful revolutionary, Hung Wu, as first emperor. In capturing Peking he showed himself unusually merciful by giving orders that there should be no unnecessary slaughter ; and he afterwards showed himself both a wise ruler and an able general. His generals gained important victories over the Mongols through the whole north of China, expelling them from Yenanfu, among other places.

It was during the reign of this first Ming emperor that the present Prefectural Yamen was built, and also the County Court in the East Suburb. Inscriptions on numerous monuments bear witness to the great prosperity of this city and neighbourhood throughout the Ming dynasty, than when it never came nearer to the realisation of the ideal expressed in its name.

In the year 1488, when the Ming dynasty was at the zenith of its glory, the Great Wall was repaired. At that time there were ten thousand soldiers inside this city, and fifty-five thousand in the surrounding neighbourhood. A great school was also established on a site that has since become the property of the Baptist Missionary Society.

One of the great undertakings of that period was the

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

PAGODA ON HILL OVERLOOKING SOUTH OF CITY OF YENANFU. IT WAS BUILT 900 A.D.

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

A DESERTED DEITY

This brass idol is on the top of one of the highest hills amid the ruins of what was once a magnificent temple.

construction of a bridge across the River Yen, which runs just beneath the East Wall of the city, making intercourse between the County Court, which was then in what is yet called the East Suburb, and the Prefectural Court on the western side possible. But the bridge was carried away by one of the periodical summer floods. Ordinarily this river appears entirely harmless. In winter it is always frozen sufficiently to permit all kinds of traffic to cross on the ice. But often in summer, as I have the best of reasons for knowing, it swells to many times its normal volume. In half-an-hour I have known it increase its depth from two to twelve feet, and multiply its width by four.

These floods sweep everything before them : houses, cattle, etc. Once I saw nearly the third part of a large mulberry orchard in mid-stream.

Before the close of the Ming dynasty materials were gathered and preparations completed for the reconstruction of the bridge ; but before the actual work was commenced a rebellion broke out in North Shensi, which it is our purpose now to record.

CHAPTER V

HOW YENANFU ESTABLISHED THE MANCHU DYNASTY

FROM time immemorial Yenanfu has had its share in the vicissitudes of China's story. It is so situated that it has been involved in almost every struggle, even if its contributions to Imperial policies have not been great. But we have now to relate that it was once given to Yenanfu to play a big part. For it was Yenanfu that overthrew the Ming dynasty, and was thus responsible for the establishment of the Manchu dynasty (Ta Ching) which has only just ended.

The Manchus had commenced a campaign against China, and the Manchu leader had established his capital at Mukden. He successfully invaded Korea (in 1629) and at the head of a hundred thousand men advanced on China, encamping not far from the city walls of Peking.

What might have happened if North Shensi had been peaceful it is impossible to tell. The course of Chinese, and to some extent of the world's, history might have been different.

As so often happens, the foe from without might have been resisted had there been unanimity within. But just at the time when the dreaded foe was invading

China on the north-east a serious rebellion broke out in North Shensi.

One of the leaders, Li Tsï Ch'eng, who may have been a descendant of Mao-tun, Heilienpopo and Chao Yuan Hao, was originally a groom in the Yamen of Mitsï, a city a hundred miles north of the city of Yenanfu, and not now included, as it was at that time, in the Yenanfu prefecture. The other leader, Chang Hsien Chung, was a lictor in the Yenanfu Yamen.

Yenanfu and Suitechou were among the first cities to fall into their hands. It was not long, however, before Sianfu, the ancient Imperial capital, was captured, and Li Tsï Ch'eng assumed the title of emperor. After a series of great successes he marched on to Peking via Taiyuanfu, declaring he was about to establish a new dynasty. The recent activity of the White Wolf in this province bears striking resemblance to the earlier stages of the rising led by these North Shensi rebels.

The emperor of China was taken by surprise, his capital closely invested, and all means of escape were cut off. Despairing of his life, the emperor, with one of his faithful attendants, ascended the Coal Hill, which is situated to the north of the Imperial palace in Peking, and after looking down on the vast host assembled to destroy his capital, ended his troubles in true Chinese fashion, by committing suicide.

The North Shensi rebel (Li Tsï Ch'eng) then took possession of Peking, though his days of triumph were few.

A renowned Chinese general, Wu San Kwei, who had

been fighting against the invading Manchus, actuated by motives of personal hatred to Li Tsï Ch'eng, determined to play the rôle of avenger of the emperor. To effect this purpose (China is the land of compromise and diplomacy) he entered into an alliance with the hated Manchu, against whom, till then, he had been engaging in deadly conflict. The Manchus were only too willing to participate in a struggle of which at that time they had been but idle spectators.

The North Shensi rebels advanced against General Wu San Kwei, and a severe engagement took place. The fortune of battle seemed about to declare itself on the side of the rebels, when a large Manchu force appeared on the scene and turned the scale. The rebels took to flight and were hotly pursued by the general. The rebel leader fled to Peking, and after setting fire to his newly acquired palace, continued his flight towards Shensi. He was still pursued by Wu San Kwei, who after frequent engagements with the rebels finally defeated them, and Li Tsï Ch'eng was subsequently killed.

This is the very barest record of how a North Shensi rebel contested the throne with the last emperor of the Ming dynasty.

And the result? Neither of the parties originally concerned gained what they sought. Both lost their lives as well as their cause, and a third party stepped in and reaped the results.

General Wu San Kwei invited the Manchus to help suppress the Shensi rebels. They *came* to help General Wu, but they *stayed* to help themselves. And that is

how the Manchu dynasty was founded. Shensi had much to do with its establishment in 1644, as it had with its final overthrow in 1911. And is this not essentially what happened again in 1911–1912, when the republic was founded ?

The principal antagonist and protagonist were the Manchu emperor and Dr Sun Yat Sen, both of whom have since disappeared from the scene, while the power came to a third party.

In 1644 and 1911 the rebels succeeded in the work of destruction ; whereas construction, which is a different thing, had to be left to another.

CHAPTER VI

CHIEFLY CONCERNING COMETS—1640–1800

THE first two centuries of Manchu dynasty, which North Shensi did so much to establish, were by no means undisturbed here. But for this period we lack detailed information. As has been said, the records of any given dynasty are kept quite secret until that dynasty has passed away. Only then is it safe to review critically the years. And it is too early yet for the publication of records of the Manchu dynasty so recently ended.

In the year 1660 the East Gate of the city was carried away by flood, but was speedily repaired. During the reign of Kang Hsi, by far the most illustrious of Manchu emperors of China, there was a rebellion against his reign in the south and west of China, led by Wu San Kwei, the very general who had invited the Manchus' help against the Shensi rebels. He was naturally not pleased by the fact that the Manchus had been so thorough in accepting his invitation.

While the emperor was fully occupied in dealing with his former host, the Mongolians improved the opportunity by invading the north of Shensi and Shansi. And in the course of this warfare the city of Yenanfu was destroyed.

But when the Imperial authority was re-established it was greatly strengthened. Inscriptions state that in the eighteenth year of Kanghsi (*i.e.* 1680) not only was the present city of Yenanfu rebuilt on its present site, enclosing a much smaller area than formerly, but the present Prefectural Yamen Buildings and the bell tower were also erected, and a new County Court established, this time on this side of the river.

It may be interpolated here that shortly after the revolution of 1911 and 1912 the County Court Buildings were vacated by the County Magistrate, and dilapidation, already far advanced, was accelerated. But American geologists were recently seeking premises for their headquarters and the writer was able to conduct negotiations with the local gentry which secured these buildings for the purpose. A complete transformation was effected; now within these ancient premises the instruments of the most modern science are in constant use, while in the afternoons such sports as tennis and croquet are played by foreign ladies and gentlemen, and a twentieth-century scene is presented, undreamt of by the officials of Kanghsi who established the County Court there in 1680!

History records that Yung Cheng, the son and successor of Kanghsi, was extremely hostile to Roman Catholic Missions, and expelled all missionaries from the interior, only permitting a very limited number to reside even at the coast.

Whether or no he favoured Buddhism it is impossible to know, but, as we have already recorded, the sacred

mountain at Yenanfu bears abundant testimony to a great revival of Buddhism here during his reign. Numerous inscriptions relate that old temples were renovated and restored, while new ones were built. And there are indications both within and without the city of considerable prosperity.

By the opening of the nineteenth century the power of the dynasty began to wane. During the reign of Chia Cheng (1796–1821) secret societies began to arise. One of the most powerful of these was called the White Lily Society, the professed object of which was to exterminate the Manchus and restore the Ming dynasty. It is significant that this society exercised its greatest influence in the provinces of Hupeh, Honan, Shensi, Kansuh, Szechwan, the very provinces where the Elder Brother Society became so powerful in subsequent years.

In 1796 the White Lily Society took advantage of the appearance of a comet in the skies to raise the standard of revolt in the western provinces just mentioned.

Comets have consistently been signals of rebellion in China, and this fact may justify a diversion from the strict chronological order of this story.

As soon as it was known in China that Halley's Comet would be visible in May, 1910, it was feared that designing revolutionaries would point to it as a signal of probable successful rebellion. Well-wishers of China, therefore, immediately set to work to prepare the people's minds for its advent and so forestall trouble.

BUDDHIST HELL

A woman ground head first in mill for injury to her husband.

71934

When Halley's Comet [1] was last seen (1835) Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, had just died. At that time there were no newspapers or modern schools, telegraph or post offices, neither were there any missionaries in the interior to explain the wonders of the solar system of which comets form a part. Superstition had therefore free course.

In 1910, however, things were different. Shortly after Professor Wolfe, of Heidleberg, obtained the first photographic evidence of the approaching visitor, it was felt that all the forces of progress should be marshalled to grapple with ignorance and superstition.

The Christian Literature Society of China issued a striking poster of which three thousand five hundred were displayed throughout the Empire, and the leading tract societies had over a hundred thousand tracts on sale before the comet became visible.

The result was that when the comet did appear, every one was ready for it, and peace prevailed throughout the whole of China.

[1] For a valuable paper on the campaign against superstition which preceded the appearance of Halley's Comet see *China Mission Year Book*, 1910, Appendix X.

CHAPTER VII

THE TAI-PING AND MOHAMMEDAN REBELLIONS: AND THEIR RESULTS

MOHAMMEDANS first came to China as traders in the ninth century, and they brought with them much of the science and art of the West. In the seventeenth century the Mussulmans of Kashgar sent tribute to Peking. The numerous and terrible Mohammedan rebellions against Chinese government have had one common cause—the occupation of Kashgar by China in 1760.

The principal seat of the Mohammedan population is in the north-west of China, in the provinces of Shensi and Kansuh, often referred to as Shen-kan. A usually reliable authority, L. Richards, in his *Comprehensive Geography of the Chinese Empire*, states: "In Shensi there are four millions of them." It is difficult to say if these figures were, or were not, correct before the great rebellion to which we are about to refer; they are certainly far in excess of the present Mohammedan population.

It is not our purpose to tell the story of this great rebellion, which lasted for seventeen years (1861–1878), but merely to show its bearings on the city of Yenanfu and its neighbourhood. Suffice it to say that so terrible

was it that after peace was restored there were not in Shensi or Kansuh enough men to till the fields. It is estimated that ten millions of people were killed in these two provinces alone. In palliation for its savageness, however, it should be stated that all authorities are agreed that the Mohammedans were driven to rebellion by persistent persecutions on the part of the Chinese.

Neither would it be in place here to record in any details the other great rebellion, the "Tai-ping," which ravaged the Empire for over thirty years (1830–1864).

This movement had some striking points in common with Mohammedanism. It might be described as Mohammedanism in miniature. It was at first a religious movement only, later becoming political; it shared with Christianity and Mohammedanism the belief in one true God; its founder claimed to be a brother of Jesus; its propaganda was iconoclastic, and it attempted to overthrow the ruling dynasty.

The technical name of the rebellion is "Tai-ping"—*i.e.* Great Peace—and its object was to establish a dynasty with that title. The followers, however, are popularly referred to as "the long-haired robbers," showing that the Chinese are not always euphemistic! The reference is to the fact that they desisted from the custom introduced by the Manchu dynasty of shaving the front of the head.

From 1830 to 1878 one or other, or both, of these two great rebellions were ravaging the Empire. How did they affect Yenanfu? One part of China may be utterly indifferent to what is proceeding in another.

And it was thirty-six years from the outbreak of hostilities before the peace of Yenanfu was disturbed, and these were some of the most prosperous years in Yenanfu history. For the record of the succession of disasters that followed I am indebted to an elderly inhabitant of this city, one of its leading "gentry." It is not without irony that these thirty-six years of rebellion were the very years in which Yenanfu came nearest to fulfilling the meaning of its title—Permanent Peace Prefecture.

My informant spoke with justifiable enthusiasm as he recalled his city as it was in the days of his youth. "There were eight pawnshops," he exclaimed. This in China is the last word regarding prosperity. For in China a different standard of values from our own obtains. White is the colour for mourning, men are the social superiors of women, scholars learn their different lessons by each shouting his own at the top of his voice, and the pawnshop is commerce at the top of the social scale.

Further, the city was populated in every part; every cave on the Western Hill even was occupied. And the buildings were of a worthy kind; indeed such as have remained till now confirm the truth of the statement.

Moreover, opium had only recently been introduced, and although much was being cultivated and sold, the misery and poverty so prevalent now as its result were meanwhile unknown.

And then the spell of peace and prosperity was broken. In the third month of the sixth year of the

Emperor Tung Chih (*i.e.* April, 1866) a large Mohammedan army came. It had devastated all the towns on the route. Terror-stricken people from all the surrounding country-side, and indeed from Kansuh, crowded into Yenanfu. Happily Yenanfu was then well able to resist the rebels, and the Mohammedans knew they could not attack it except at great loss to themselves. Indeed Yenanfu enjoys the unique honour in these parts of not having been utterly destroyed by the followers of the Prophet. So the army at this time passed by, encamping in one of the towns to the north-west of Yenanfu, and carrying the campaign into this end of Kansuh.

This was not done without the total depopulation and robbing of the whole country-side, and the crowding of this city with large numbers of people from other districts, involving a tremendous drain on local resources. So much for April, 1866.

In the tenth Chinese month of the same year (November, 1866) a branch of the Tai-ping rebel army that had been disturbing the peace of the Empire for thirty-six years reached Yenanfu. I am not able to make this event fit into a place in any history of the rebellion that I have seen. By the date mentioned, the rebellion is said to have been entirely suppressed by General Gordon's "ever-victorious army." But the inconsistency should not throw the slightest discredit on the story told me by the elderly inhabitant—who actually saw the rebels. For what is inconsistency? Half the time it arises from the observation of isolated

scraps of too limited knowledge. And no story or event in China is ever more than that of a mere part. A great movement, especially a great rebellion, always has accompaniments. The army that came here was probably a branch, unknown to the historian, perhaps unknown to the trunk. It had completed the depopulation of the country, so thoroughly begun seven months earlier by the Mohammedans. The soldiers had robbed everywhere (how else could they live ?) and the surviving populace had fled.

The Yenanfu military official was a man of unusual courage, and completed preparations to resist them. He appeared fully dressed in official robes on the city wall with his forces. At the sight of his pointed guns the rebel leaders called out : "Don't shoot ; if you do, not one solitary person of this city will be saved alive. We do not intend to attack you ; we are merely passing by *en route*." And indeed they did pass by, leaving Yenanfu with nothing worse than a new panic.

Their purpose appeared to be to go via Taiyuanfu to Peking. So passed November, 1866, and the people settled down again.

In the following April (1867) the Mohammedans returned on one of their periodical raids. A pitched battle was fought ten miles south of this city, in which the Mussulmans were victorious, and in which it is estimated that twenty thousand of the North Shensi troops were annihilated. My informant told me that the Mohammedan forces could only increase. When attacking a neighbourhood they would almost annihilate

inhabitants. But not quite; they preserved one or two, whom they compelled to lead them, and join their forces. To prevent desertion, they would cut off a certain one of their captives' fingers, making later recognition easy.

And then followed famine. "For this," said my elderly friend with great magnanimity, "Heaven was not to be blamed." The weather had been seasonable, and so, had there been peace, there would certainly have been prosperity. The famine was one of the many disastrous accompaniments of the war. In 1866 the one rebel army came before the harvest and the other afterwards; it was therefore neither entirely lost nor wholly saved. The result was that in 1867 there was bigger demand with a smaller supply than usual. This meant an immediate and tremendous rise in the price of the limited quantity of stored provisions.

The second attack by the Mohammedans in April, 1867, had entirely prevented sowing and reaping that year. The problem of famine is usually that of transportation; there is always enough for all, if it can be distributed. But the war prevented provisions from coming. So vividly were the experiences of those days printed in the mind of my informant that he remembered clearly the exact prices of the various necessaries of life: 1 lb. of rice, 5d.; 1 lb. of wheat, 6d.; 1 lb. pork, 1s.; eggs, 4½d. each.

These prices may not impress Europeans as famine prices; it will be better understood to say that they are ten times the normal price. And the logical result

followed. Food was ten times its usual cost and therefore 90 per cent. of the people starved. It would not be seemly to relate the revolting story. At nights it was not safe to go out of doors, for murders were not uncommon. Human flesh was eaten, and although the punishment for that was the disgusting slicing process, it did not deter some of the more violent. Large numbers of the dead were daily carried out to a pit just outside the East Gate. People who had property sold it at any price to obtain food. Windows and doors, and the main structure of the houses (the whole support of a Chinese house is wood, the walls are incidental and bear no weight) were burnt as firewood. But all the methods combined were not sufficient to save more than a tenth of the population.

This small remnant, however, had a good harvest in 1869, and the prospects consistently improved until 1876, when Yenanfu shared the desolating effects of a real famine which extended over several provinces and caused the death of eight millions of people. These were, however, not so disastrous in the Yenanfu area, where the majority of people are farmers, whose granaries contained some surplus from the preceding seven good harvests.

The city has never recovered from the devastating effects of the war and famine, far less has the surrounding country. Wild beasts have taken advantage of the absence of man. While the level country has been recultivated, and by gradual stages the wider mountain valleys are being won back, the narrower

gullies are infested with leopards, wild boar, wolves, etc. Human beings, except in large numbers, can only venture at their peril. Our colporteurs, who traverse the entire district, say that the footprints of leopards are very numerous. The whole Yenanfu area is therefore now one of the poorest in the whole of China. The official revenue is not nearly equal to the cost of administration; it is a loss to the Government. Mr A. de C. Sowerby, the well-known naturalist and explorer, in his book, *Through Shenkan*, devotes considerable space to Yenanfu, and shows it to be an ideal district for the sportsman.

High hopes are now being entertained that the poverty of Yenanfu and its neighbourhood will not be permanent, but that the recent large introduction of foreign capital will result in making available its vast potential wealth. But this must be reserved for a later chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

A.D. 1900—THE BOXER YEAR AND ITS ISSUE

IT is somewhat striking that in both of the two great political convulsions of recent years in China *Shensi* disobeyed the orders of headquarters. In the revolution of 1911, when the policy was to "Protect Foreigners," eight foreigners were killed and others injured; while during the Boxer Rising of 1900, when foreigners were ordered by Imperial edict to be massacred, no foreigner was molested. Owing to the heroic action of the then provincial governor, his Excellency the late Twan Fang, in suppressing the edict of the Empress Dowager, it was rendered possible for all the Shensi missionaries to travel to the coast in safety. While the Chinese Christians were necessarily alarmed, they were unharmed.

But Shensi was not therefore free from disaster, for in 1900 it was the scene of a terrible famine. In this, of course, it was not unique, for it will be remembered that in other places it was the famine that afforded the occasion for evil designers to stir up animal passions, by appealing to ignorant superstitions.

Politics in China largely depend on harvests. The immediate success of the republic is assured if there is a succession of good crops. Those who wish for a return

to a monarchical form of government had better pray for a famine. It will be far more effective in stirring up the people than all the propaganda of politicians. The principal results of the Shensi famine that it is relevant for us to recall here is, that the one place in the province where the famine was slightly less severe, and where prices of food were not quite so fabulous, was the Yenanfu area. For Yenanfu is thinly populated, much of the land is uncultivated, and the refugees were able to live on things that grew wild. Amongst others, Christians from the famine-stricken area left their houses and journeyed to Yenanfu. Here they were able to live for nearly a year, until the worst was over.

Although these refugees did not carry on any evangelistic propaganda, they at least afforded the Yenanfu population some kind of an object lesson by the conduct of their regular services.

It is not without interest that the original introduction of Baptist Missionary Society work to Shensi in 1891 was related to an earlier famine. Famine and flood had brought distress to thousands of people in the over-populated province of Shantung. Attracted by free offers of land made by the Government of the depopulated province of Shensi, large numbers of refugees, among them many Christians, came and settled on the Sianfu plain, and secured a few years of good harvests. And it was at their request that the first Baptist missionaries came to Shensi.[1] Now again in 1900 some

[1] *Missionary Mail*, by Rev. Moir Duncan, M.A., LL.D.

of them were driven, at least for a time, by famine from their homes on the plain to these northern hills.

It may not be quite accurate to say that this famine was the first introduction of Christianity to Yenanfu. Missionaries of the China Inland Mission had certainly passed through on itinerating tours. In 1898 a Chinese Christian business man settled and gathered a few people around him, and as a result of his report an evangelist was appointed for a few months in 1899. And it was probably the knowledge of the district thus acquired that suggested the idea of leading the famine refugees to Yenanfu in 1900. Again, after these had returned, evangelists were occasionally appointed to visit Yenanfu.

Of the traceable results of this first approach of Christianity to Yenanfu, it must be frankly confessed they were on the whole unsatisfactory. The motives that attracted the first batch of people were various, but all grossly material. The idea was abroad that Christianity meant influence of an official kind. They had much in common with the people who in earlier days would have taken Jesus by force and made Him a King, and at the same time ensured that His Kingdom should be of the world. Employees in the Yamen dared, after associating themselves with the evangelist, to browbeat the head official, and oppress their fellow-citizens. They soon fell to mean disputes among themselves; and the very antithesis of the Christian spirit was displayed. There was, however, one man, named Ch'ü, to whom frequent reference will yet be made, who in

spite of all the petty quarrelling found the truth, though how he did is a spiritual miracle. He is the link between that past and the present.

In 1903, largely through his zeal and liberality, a small house was procured and renovated. But it was not long before the early associates, concerned only with the prestige which association with a religion from a foreign country was supposed to afford, kept away, though they still occupied themselves with all forms of petty persecution of him. He, however, remained steadfast.

A mile or two to the south of the city he had noticed a bell, which had previously belonged to a temple now destroyed. He approached the official and was granted permission to use it. In this he followed precedent, for most of the Shensi chapel bells have been converted from Buddhism, having previously belonged to Buddhist temples. This bell he erected in the courtyard, and Sunday by Sunday he struck it a few times to indicate that it was the day of worship, did his best to read a few verses of Scripture (he had never been to school), and with his little boy knelt in prayer, then returned. This was the net traceable result of efforts prior to the residence of a foreign missionary, and it affords a characteristic illustration both of the possibility of the spread of Christianity without the direct influence of the foreigner, and also of the dangers and weakness to which communities thus gathered are peculiarly exposed.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

PROSPECTING AND ENTERING

HAVING disposed in so small a space of four millenniums, shall we proceed in much greater length to deal with four years? There is at least this to be argued in favour of the inequality of space, that we know far more about the years 1910–1914 than of the preceding four thousand.

At the close of the nineteenth century Mr Arthington, of Leeds, left, amongst other legacies, £300,000 to the B.M.S. for missionary work. There were a number of exact stipulations regarding the method of expending this large sum, the main one being that the money must be used for *new* work. Baptist missionaries in all fields gathered together and prepared schemes for the occupation of hitherto unentered areas in the section of the mission field allotted to China. In Shensi, the mission staff naturally turned their attention to the vast unoccupied areas of North Shensi. In the autumn of 1907 Revs. W. Y. Fullerton and C. E. Wilson visited the then existing China stations on behalf of the Home Committee. The limits of their time did not permit them to visit unoccupied places, except such as lay on

their route. They therefore suggested that two members of the Shensi staff should make a tour throughout North Shensi, and present a scheme to the Committee in England.

Revs. John Bell and James Watson were selected for this work, and they prepared a report of great value. The sequel of this, so far as Yenanfu is concerned, was that while engaged in work amongst the numerous village churches on the Shensi plain in 1909, I received a letter from the Committee of the B.M.S. inviting my wife and myself to occupy Yenanfu as their representatives. During my closing months on the plain I made as much preparation as possible for the new work in the mountains and in particular kept a keen look out for prospective Chinese helpers.

In February, with the evangelist and school teacher whom I had selected, I set out for a preliminary tour. At the end of our fifth day's journey we reached a town —Lo Chwan—which was to mark our southern border. We spent the following day—Sunday—there, preaching all day to crowds in the inn-yard. At night, in conversation with the innkeeper, we found him quite willing to let a small front room at the not unreasonable rent of threepence per week. This was our first entrance into a town whose fortunes and our own have since been somewhat linked.

On the following day our destination was Fu Chow, where we found, as we expected, a family who knew something about the Gospel before moving there.

Photo by *F. A. Herald, Esq., M.Sc.*

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE CITY OF YENANFU, FACING NORTH

Baptist Missionary Society's premises marked X. The pagoda in the foreground is over 1000 years old. The main street runs due north from the pagoda. On the west side the city wall is seen climbing up the hill face. On the east is the river Yen.

There are probably very few towns left in China within whose four walls there is not someone who has heard the Gospel elsewhere. Through the good offices of those we have mentioned we were able here also to secure suitable premises.

Two days later we reached the city of Yenanfu, and occupied the small premises that had been procured by Mr Ch'ü some years earlier.

The city of Yenanfu is on an altitude of 3107 feet above sea-level. Its climate is ideally healthy, both the extreme heat and intense cold being dry. In winter the thermometer registers as low as 10° below zero, and in summer as high in the shade as 100° (both Fahrenheit). And there is another strong contrast —viz. between midday and morning and night. It is possible at noon to look at the river frozen so solidly that the heaviest traffic can pass over on the ice, and at the northern aspect on the hills, covered thickly with snow, and yet to bask in warm and bright sunshine such as would be envied by holiday-makers in England in July and August, and which certainly makes one's winter clothing uncomfortably cumbersome.

We could hardly expect Yenanfu to take much notice of our entrance. The three hills on its south, east and western sides had looked down upon numerous and varied visitors. It would not be reasonable to expect a city that was accustomed to convulsions of every kind to become excited at our approach. Yenanfu had been repeatedly involved in movements that have affected world history. Might it not say : "The Huns, I know,

and Buddhism, and Mohammedanism, and the Tai-pings, and some form even of Christianity, but who are you ?" Not only in the remote past, but in the memory of many living citizens, a series of shocks have been experienced. The Mohammedan and Tai-ping Rebellions, the Boxer Rising, and two famines, as well as a most pitiable misrepresentation of Christianity, had not yet been forgotten. Obviously Yenanfu history would not begin with us. How could we expect to make even the smallest stir ? Had we not come very late in the day, and were we not the least impressive of its long line of visitors ?

On the morning following our arrival I was successful, thanks to the efforts of Mr Ch'ü, in procuring a shop in the busiest part of the main street to serve as a preaching hall. Workmen soon commenced the renovation also of a house we bought as our future residence. Four boys were accepted as the nucleus of our future school, and they started their studies in the same small house so often mentioned. Thus we sowed our mustard seed, "which indeed is the smallest of all seeds." After a week I returned to the south, leaving the evangelist and the school teacher to start work while I went for my wife.

A month later I started again. We reached Yenanfu on the evening of 27th April 1910. We may legitimately claim that we were pioneers. Although at different times many European travellers had passed through Yenanfu, probably including Marco Polo in the thirteenth century, I happened to be the first European man actually to reside in Yenanfu, in spite of the fact

that its history, as we have seen, goes further back than even the days of Abraham. Into such a place no knowledge of the nine wonders of the world has penetrated. But the arrival of the missionary meant the introduction of a few things that caused wonderment enough. There was his wife, the first non-Chinese lady ever seen in North Shensi; his baby, the first European baby ever born there; his Bilhorn organ; his wife's sewing machine; the coal-scuttle, and—climax of the miraculous—his bicycle. What is a flying machine that they have not seen compared with the bicycle they have seen? Once when I was riding on one of the few roads that permitted of it, a villager beckoned to me, and said he had heard something of the mysterious wonder of the railway train, and now his wild ambition was rewarded—at last one was before him. But it was just my old cushion-tyred bicycle!

A week or two later I wrote to the Home Society announcing our safe arrival, and giving our first impressions, and these can be best given in the words written at that time:

"You will be glad to know that my wife and I are here at Yenanfu, and already fairly busily at work. We left Fu-yin-Tsun on Tuesday, April 19th, reaching our new out-station at Lo Chwan on Saturday evening. We spent Sunday there, and had the privilege of speaking to numbers of people in the little preaching-room on the big street. The evangelist who is to settle at Lo Chwan accompanied me from the south, and I left him at his new station.

" On Monday evening I installed the new evangelist appointed for Fu Chow in his new sphere and then travelled on to Yenanfu, reaching here on Wednesday evening, April 27th.

" Our house was habitable, the instructions I left while on my short visit having been well carried out. But there remained much to be done, and this has kept us busy. We have been fortunate in securing so good a house, and of course the total cost of money and time is only the merest fraction of what would be required for a residence built in foreign style.

" On arriving I found that the evangelist and school teacher whom I left here in March had been conscientiously working. The preaching-room, which is situated at the very best part of the principal street, has numerous visitors at all times, and crowds during preaching. The small school has eight scholars, the children of associates.

" The school has been carried on in the little building purchased by one of the earlier church members, Mr Ch'ü. The Sunday services have also been held in it. It is, of course, much too small for either purpose, and I have rented other premises which will be suitable for school and worship, and these should soon be ready for occupation.

" On account of the smallness of the building it has not been possible for men and women to worship together. My wife has therefore had a separate service for women in our house. This not very desirable arrangement will not need to last long, and

the special women's meeting can be held on another day.

"We have an assured congregation now of not less than twenty-three men, and this will be increased when we get into the new building.

"Last week, in accordance with Chinese custom, I went to pay my respects to the principal officials. The head civil official, who governs ten counties, received me very warmly, and on the following day returned the call, staying at our house for a considerable part of the morning. This proved genuine friendliness; a merely official call would have been much briefer. The county mandarin, unlike his predecessor, was also quite friendly.

"One of the military colonels was unable to see me on account of ill health, but he proved his willingness to establish intercourse by requesting the loan of a comfortable chair—a thing you would hardly believe a Chinese knows how to use, so straight are their own. We willingly sent him an easy deck-chair."

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY PROBLEMS OF THE PIONEER

BUT after the first freshness had worn off we had to face the real problems that belonged to our conquest for Christianity of this city and neighbourhood. And it has always seemed to me that not only honesty, but also wisdom, demands that these should be recorded. It is no compliment to the intelligence of our supporters to inform them only of the bright side ; for one moment's thought must make them know that this cannot be the whole, or the representative, truth, that things are not usually so simple in our meanwhile imperfect world. And it is surely an insult to their faith to suggest that it will completely collapse the moment it encounters a serious difficulty. Would it not rather appeal to the heroic in them to know that there is a battle to be fought ? The Church at home feels that it expresses the truth regarding itself when it sings :

> " 'Twas tribulation ages since,
> 'Tis tribulation still."

But this must at least be as true abroad, where added to other difficulties are those of an initial and pioneering character.

I at least purpose paying the intelligence and faith

of my readers the compliment of informing them of problems as well as of prospects. Here are some of the more outstanding.

(1) Everyone is aware that until recently the Chinese have been exceedingly conservative. They have an ancient civilisation of which they are justly proud, and until recently they have seen no reason why they should either alter or add to it. All of their dealings with foreign peoples had been extremely unfortunate—from their point of view. Most Chinese had the idea—not altogether without foundation—that foreigners on the whole sought to exploit them. And in interior areas such as this the majority of the people imagined that behind even missionary propaganda there was some sinister motive, either commercial or political—perhaps both.

When we met the people we were always treated with courtesy—with a courtesy that almost reached perfection point. But one had to recognise that the Chinese are skilled adepts at an outer courtesy, which has little or nothing to do with their inner feelings. To *meet* them was, therefore, easy and enjoyable ; but to *move* them was another matter, for then one seemed to be resisting a veritable wall, not of active opposition, but of obstinacy, of conservatism, superstition, suspicion, self-satisfaction, pride and prejudice. I can think of no more apt figure than that to express our first difficulty—a wall. China is a land of walls. Happily the walls have gates, usually several. But the wall is there. On the north-west border of Yenanfu, as has already

been told, there is the Great Wall of China, one of the wonders of the world. Then around every city and town, as well as many villages, and most homes, is a wall. And this seemed a figure of the lives of the people, around every one of which was a wall of pride and prejudice.

From where did the idea arise that the heathen everywhere are eagerly desiring to hear the Gospel, and will always welcome its messenger? It did not come from the Old Testament nor from the New. The prophets had no such experience, neither had Jesus or his apostles. "If they have persecuted Me, so will they persecute you," said the Master to His apostles, lest they should start out under any delusion. To know that the heathen *need* the gospel is one thing, to suppose that they *desire* it, quite another. It is not long before the pioneer feels that he faces a wall of suspicion, to remove which will require all the combined love, both of God *and of man.*

(2) The opium habit. Yenanfu is one of those areas where the opium habit was much more than usually prevalent. It is no exaggeration to say that 90 per cent. of the people of the city were to a smaller or greater extent its victims. It has been propagated with an ease altogether unknown to the Gospel; for it has gone not only along the main highways to the provincial capitals, but also into every prefecture, every county, every town, into numberless villages, and, in the case of Yenanfu, into practically every home. It would probably be impossible for

anyone fully to describe its manifold malevolent effects.

It leads to utter destitution. When it has entered, it often obtains the first claim. There is not sufficient money for food and clothes, far less for rent or education; and it was our experience that when a new piece of property came into the market there was usually just one cause—opium had rendered the sale inevitable.

But it leads to physical as well as financial ruin. The victim of this habit must bid farewell to his physical vigour. It leads to varying kinds of disease and complicates every form of treatment.

But, worst of all, it results in moral disaster. For the person's will becomes weakened, so that he is no longer able to make and keep a noble resolve. He becomes unusually cunning and deceitful. In a word, he seems unable to rise to the full height of noble moral manhood.

And what hope is there for the individual victim? Very little, for the habit leads to a craving that can only be treated medically. So many and so serious are the complications which always arise during the cure that our medical men have insisted that non-medical men should not undertake the task. And there was no doctor nearer than ten days' journey, and then only weather permitting.

And worse than all, even of those comparatively few who in other places have been fortunate enough to have medical supervision for their cure a large percentage

go back. For the simple reason that the cure requires co-operation; it needs more than medicine; it demands moral manhood, and unless this is renewed at the only place where it can be renewed there is practically no hope for the individual victim of the opium habit. And in Yenanfu 90 per cent. of the people we wanted to win had their moral natures undermined by this evil habit. Here was a difficulty that it were blindness to ignore.

(3) False hopes entertained by many. Since the Boxer Rising of 1900 foreigners have been held in considerable awe by the Chinese, who have greatly feared disputes with them. One result has been that foreign residents have been able to exercise strong influence with local officials. So afraid have magistrates been of resisting the influence of the foreigner that they sometimes decide in favour of their adherents—even at the expense of justice.

In neighbourhoods such as this, where the totally contrasted methods of Roman Catholics and Protestants were not at first understood, large numbers of people with a grievance crowd around the new foreign missionary. So persistent is the patience of the average Chinaman that it sometimes requires many months, if not years, before his purpose is apparent, and it is discouraging to find, after months of careful observation, that it is something other than the Gospel that is sought. We might have innumerable "rice Christians" if we were not careful.

The populace of Palestine once gathered in large

numbers around Jesus, but the sacred writer who records the fact adds that it was "not for Jesus' sake only." And on another day when the crowds were so great that He had nowhere to stand, the Master entered in His diary: "Some fell by the wayside; some on stony places; some among thorns; and some on good ground." Out of four kinds of soil only one was satisfactory.

CHAPTER III

AN IMPERFECT PROPAGANDA : IS THERE NO PHYSICIAN THERE ?

THERE is one method just suited to meet the three outstanding difficulties mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Pride and prejudice yield to the person who can remove pain. For the opium smoker the doctor is the one person desired. And if it is necessary to have a physical means to a spiritual end, here is the means that has so often succeeded, from the days of the Great Physician till now.

We therefore purpose devoting this chapter to a discussion of the medical method of missionary work.

There are two contrasted qualifications for writing on any subject. The one is knowledge, the other ignorance. Of these the latter is by far the more fruitful, and leads to statements of a very authoritative nature. How otherwise could globe-trotters write books on the Far East, or residents in the treaty ports make statements about China proper ? A very little knowledge would be enough to make them hesitate, while an extended experience would make them decline the task altogether !

For writing on the subject of medical missions the present writer possesses to a large degree the supreme qualification of ignorance.

But the subject of medical missions may be regarded as twofold: (1) The positive—what *is* being done. (2) The negative—what is *not* being done. And this second is by far the greater of the two, and on this the writer can speak with the authority that comes from knowledge.

Of *deeds* let the doctors speak; of *needs* the non-medical men know more; and Yenanfu *was a sphere of needs* rather than of deeds.

Now it must be obvious to anyone who gives one moment's thought to the subject that there is a personal aspect of this subject. It not infrequently happens that missionaries who reside long distances from a doctor become conscious that they are working under a handicap; that, without being definitely ill, they know they are not vigorously well, yet they are not aware either of the cause or the remedy. And so, apart from serious and dangerous illness, there is often a lack of fitness, and the presence of a doctor would often (from that point of view alone) more than justify itself by multiplying the effectiveness of the other members of the staff.

But I prefer to leave the personal aspect entirely to the sympathetic imagination of readers.

There is, however, an argument that belongs somewhere between the personal and the impersonal that is well worth consideration: *the refusal of help to others involves serious strain on the missionary.* An instance

will illustrate. Some time ago one of the B.M.S. doctors applied to the Home Committee for extra accommodation in his hospital. Some members of the Committee are reported to have said: "He already has all the accommodation he can manage. Extra accommodation will mean extra strain, and we cannot be parties to that." To this the secretary is said to have replied: "It may be that the strain of refusing treatment is even greater than that of giving it." That argument sounds valid. No sufferer can be sent away unhelped without nervous and emotional cost of a most serious character. And if that be so, imagine what must often have been our strain, who could do little else than look helplessly at suffering, for which there was a cure, but for which the cure was too distant.

How often has the non-medical missionary, in the midst of suffering, the sight of which has cost him some of his heart's blood, cried: "Oh, Lord, how long, how long?"

But someone will probably ask, why not send sick people to the nearest doctor, *wherever he may be*? And let it be frankly admitted that there were doctors in Shensi, but *many days' journey distant.*

Here let me interpolate a necessary word about the journey between Yenanfu and Sianfu. It is ten normal stages. But that does not mean that you can rely on accomplishing the journey in any given ten days. Far from it. Often, for long periods, travelling is impossible, journeys have to be taken in instalments, with long delays between each. The meaning of ten days'

journeys is this: In the event of having ten consecutive fine days, following a period of sufficiently fine weather to make the roads good, it is possible to accomplish the journey in that time. But it will be clearly seen that such a happy combination of circumstances cannot be obtained to order. An estimate of thirteen days might be regarded as an approximate average. Thus, if we are advised to send patients to the nearest doctor, we are inclined to ask: "Do you realise what is involved in that advice?" It is the practical equivalent of saying to a man in Peking: "Sir, your disease is easily curable, and there is a doctor who can treat it *in London*, thirteen days' journey away"—for that is the time required to complete this long trip by rail.

It might be *quicker* for the Peking patient to get to London than for the Yenanfu patient to get to Sianfu, for the former would not need to stipulate "weather permitting," as the latter would. It would certainly be *easier*, for there is the railway, with its comparative comfort; and if you bear in mind the relative incomes of the East and West, it would not be dearer. Verily, I say unto you, it was easier for a man in Peking to go to London for medical help than for anyone in Yenanfu to reach the nearest doctor. But the exact or relative distance matters little. The simple fact is that for residents in Yenanfu medical help was inaccessible.

Now in the light of this appealing and appalling need I beg to maintain that the position of the Yenanfu staff was an unnatural one. There are many difficulties

which we expect, and shall continue to expect, but this is one against which we protest, for non-medical missionaries ought not to be expected to carry on their work in isolation from medical work.

I am not pleading for medical work as a kind of advertisement for missionary work; for such a view of medical missionary work is little better than pagan. Medical work is not a secular attraction for a sacred purpose; it is not a pious deceit by which people are allured for one purpose and kept for another. Let us hold Christian views about every department of our work. How shall we give a Christian definition of medical missionary work? *It is an outward, visible sign of the inner, beneficent heart of the Gospel.* So far from being a secular advertisement of the Gospel, it *is* the sacred Gospel expressing itself. The Holy Love of the Saviour has no better illustration, for the doctors' war against disease, like the Saviour's hostility to sin, has a saving purpose.

Let us not overlook the fact that Jesus never attempted His missionary work apart from His medical work. He was not only the Ideal Missionary, He was the Ideal *Medical* Missionary. And He never separated the two departments. It was He who founded the Medical Mission Auxiliary. How do we know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin? Here is our evidence: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, *He said to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed and walk.*" He illustrated His power in the unseen by displaying it in

Photo by Dr. Robertson *snapped by his "boy"*

DR. CECIL ROBERTSON (ON HORSEBACK)
STARTING FROM SIANFU FOR YENANFU

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

SOME OF THE WOMEN AND GIRLS

Photo taken when they came to "pay respects" to Mrs. Borst-Smith at Chinese New Year.

the seen. He proved His love of souls by His love of bodies.

Have you ever noticed (with all reverence be it asked) that Jesus used to reach people the best way he could, by any avenue that was available? And He usually found that the best way to reach the soul was by means of the body.

When did anyone come to Christ and say they were distressed about either their own or someone else's *spiritual* conditions? That, in any case, is not what usually happened. This rather is the kind of thing we usually read:

"A certain nobleman came and besought him that He would come down and heal his *son*, for he was at the point of death."

"Behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; . . . and besought him greatly, saying, My little *daughter* lieth at the point of death: . . . come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed."

"There came unto him a centurion, : : . saying, Lord, my *servant* lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented."

"Lord, that *I* might receive *my* sight."

Of those four people one spoke of his son, another of his daughter, yet another of his servant, still another of himself, and yet we see that, whether on behalf of themselves or of others, it was of bodies that these people spoke.

And Jesus did not upbraid them. So far as we know, He never reproved anyone for his seeming mistake of

over-estimating his mortal body at the expense of his immortal soul. He did not say that bodily suffering was unimportant, and that sin, and sin only, was man's foe. He led them to that view surely enough, but he did not state it meanwhile to sick people, far less in the form of rebuke. No; those people came about bodies, and Jesus dealt with bodies. But He so dealt with bodies that He led them to know they had souls. They received *what they came for*; but having received it, they began to feel they had not obtained *what they needed*. The bodily malady was so healed as to create the sense of the soul's sickness. In short, Jesus so dealt with the body as to make it the avenue to the soul.

And that, in a word, is the annual report of the M.M.A. year by year. This man, that woman, the other child came about his or her or someone else's body, and stayed long enough to become conscious of the deeper need of the soul.

There is a sublime sameness about the annual report of the M.M.A., a divine lack of originality. There is a sense in which it is "the same yesterday and to-day and for ever." The difference is in detail and degree, not in essence or principle. It tells the same consistent tale of the medical avenue to the souls of men.

The imperfection of the Yenanfu method was that we had to try to reach people's souls without the available avenue of their bodies.

There is no divinity in that method. And someone is to blame. Yet the blame cannot be flippantly laid

at the doors of the Committee, for with physicians, as with funds, they can only designate what they have.

But the reproach is to be moved away. The Committee have appointed Dr and Mrs Scollay to Yenanfu,[1] and before many months we may hope to welcome them. Dr Scollay, amongst his many influential patients in Sianfu, has attended no less a person than the provincial governor; whereas Mrs Scollay (as Miss Watt) did invaluable medical work during the first few months of the revolution in Sianfu, 1911–1912.

[1] Dr and Mrs Scollay reached Yenanfu toward the end of 1914 to commence medical missionary work.

CHAPTER IV

THE VISIT OF DR ROBERTSON: THE FULL GOSPEL[1]

IN the spring of 1911 the late Dr Cecil Robertson came to Yenanfu. His visit, which extended over six weeks, was not only an important episode in his career and of real significance in the scheme of his life, but an essential part of the Christian conquest of this city.

For him it was the transition between preparation and full service. He left Sianfu a learner; he returned a full-fledged worker. In the Yenanfu period we have his whole missionary career in miniature. He did practically nothing on a large scale during those great days of the following year which he had not first done on a small scale in Yenanfu. It was his first essay forth to Chinese missionary service.

Of course language study was supposed to occupy the great proportion of his time, for he was only at the beginning of his second year, and the local missionaries were anxious not to be responsible for any serious hindrance to this. Yet no one could live in the presence of such need as has already been described and not be

[1] This is abridged from what the author wrote at the request of Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., D.D., for inclusion in his book, *Cecil Robertson of Sianfu*.

keen to grasp to the full the opportunity afforded by the visit of a doctor.

Arrangements were therefore made for the immediate opening of an opium refuge, so that not one day should be lost. No one was persuaded to enter; only those were admitted whose desire for cure was strong; such strong desire being amongst the first essentials of the cure. The rooms chosen were at the back of the street preaching hall. This arrangement made it possible for the evangelist in charge to exercise constant supervision, without detriment to his regular duties. The available accommodation was fully taxed, about twenty being under regular treatment.

None of the patients were permitted to leave the premises. The weakened will would not be able to resist the temptations of liberty. But this imprisonment had its distinct positive advantages; it meant the constant companionship of the Chinese evangelist—a Christian of fine character; frequent intercourse with the missionary, as well as the attention of Dr Robertson.

Since idleness exposes to temptation, occupation was afforded. Some were able to have their own work sent in to them each day. But every one had his daily Scripture lesson to prepare, and all attended morning and evening worship. The Master's threefold and complete method—viz. *Preach*, *Teach*, *Heal*—was for this brief time employed. The patients came under the influence of the whole Gospel, of work as well as word, and under the spell of the noble Christian character of Dr Robertson.

The only exception to this Christian prison system was a woman who some months earlier had come to a knowledge of the truth through the influence of my wife, and who had since come into her employ. This woman's cure was carried on simultaneously with household duties. She was the first woman convert to Christianity in North Shensi, and her case is of interest because her faith not only made her whole, but brought her into conflict with her relatives, who persecuted her in many ways, attributing their many family sorrows to her confession of Christianity. But so completely had she been won that she stood steadfast, and afterwards so great was her confidence in Dr Robertson that when any of her friends became ill she would ask the missionary's wife to write to him describing symptoms and requesting remedies.

Then in addition to work amongst opium patients there was the more general medical missionary work. From the time Yenanfu had been occupied as a mission station my wife had done all in her power to alleviate suffering. Certain days had been appointed, and a small dispensary fitted out. The same time and place were adopted by Dr Robertson, and large numbers of people with all kinds of diseases came.

It is practically impossible for anyone to imagine the physical condition of the unfit in a district where scientific surgery and medicine never have been known. Diseases, once curable, become chronic; there is an accumulation of past disease, an unhealthy legacy.

And there is, of course, always present disease, for the sick, like the poor, are always with one.

The news very quickly spread, not only over the whole city, but throughout the prefecture, that there was a doctor in Yenanfu. And the numbers that came were not only large, but representative of the whole area.

And then not only sick people, but the friends of the sick people, came on behalf of those whose illnesses were too serious to permit of their being brought, requesting the doctor to visit their homes. I have no record of the number of these visits, but they were very numerous. I have often been a witness of the patience and kindness, as well as skill, displayed on these occasions. If the patients were in the city Dr Robertson would usually walk ; if some miles away, he would ride his horse. By these visits he became one of the most familiar and best-loved figures in the neighbourhood. It is quite safe to say, with deep reverence as well as exact truth, that the general verdict regarding these journeyings was, he " went about doing good." We were often led to think of that Kingdom from which disease, as well as sin, is expelled :

> " Where He displays His healing power
> Death and the curse are known no more."

The whole argument and value of medical missions was illustrated. The work thus done *was* a preaching of the Gospel ; one could hardly imagine any better exemplification of it. Such work was an outward, visible sign of the inner, beneficent heart of the Gospel. It was

not an advertisement *about* the Gospel, but an actual expression of the Gospel itself.

To alleviate suffering and cure disease is surely sufficient end in itself; but the simple fact was, it did not end there. By means of the bodily avenue the soul was actually reached.

But Dr Robertson was friend as well as physician. The social instinct was strong in him; there was no suggestion of the recluse in his conduct. The gift of sociability is invaluable in China, where everything is inaugurated with a feast. And it was in Yenanfu that Dr Robertson went to his first Chinese feast.

In Yenanfu there is always a long series of banquets during the first six weeks of the Chinese New Year. During my own residence there I was only rarely at home for midday meal during that period. Dr Robertson reached us toward the end of the series of festivities, and was therefore included in the invitations.

At a Chinese feast the new missionary is on his trial, and the test is by no means an easy one. The dishes are strange; some, at first, unpalatable; most are indigestible. Adaptability in food, as in all else, is one of the first qualifications of the missionary. Taste must be sacrificed to tact, digestion to duty. Here the faddist fails; but Dr Robertson was no faddist. Chopsticks presented no difficulty to one so skilful. He did not succumb to the easy temptation of making a few judicious selections. He took what was set before him

(fat pork as well), asking no questions, either for conscience sake or any other. And he was *persona grata* with all.

It was at Yenanfu also that Dr Robertson had his first intercourse with officials. We little imagined, when he accompanied me to meet our Yenanfu officials, that before that year passed away the highest officials of the whole province of Shensi would gratefully recognise Dr Robertson as benefactor.

Yenanfu was a suitable place to begin such intercourse. It is essentially an official city. Although commercially unimportant, the head mandarin of the whole prefecture resided here. Yet, being a comparatively small and outlying city, its magistrates did not rank so high as those in Sianfu. One would therefore much prefer to make his preliminary and unavoidable mistakes in such a city rather than in the provincial capital. No better training-place could therefore be imagined.

After the revolution a different type of person came into power. But in the spring of 1911 the Manchu dynasty still stood, and the etiquette was elaborate and complicated. It was with considerable hesitancy that Dr Robertson prepared for the first visit. But his unfailing courtesy and essential gentlemanliness soon made those of " the classes," as those of " the masses," his friends.

His first visit was to the prefect—the civil and practically autocratic ruler of the whole Yenanfu prefecture,

which comprises ten counties. The prefect spoke in terms of high praise of the purpose of Dr Robertson's visit—" to do good to our people, and lead them away from their great vice." And he promised any help in his power.

Next he went to see the county magistrate—civil ruler of the central of the ten counties. This official had, during the whole of his term in Yenanfu, been my familiar friend. With him Dr Robertson formed a genuine friendship, and there was between them sincere mutual admiration and respect.

But the Yenanfu official whom he came to know most intimately of all was the head *military* mandarin for the whole prefecture. This official was unusually progressive. Perhaps no better evidence of this could be given than the fact that he sometimes borrowed my bicycle! In things Chinese he had been my own " guide, philosopher and friend." He occasionally attended public worship. He studied the New Testament, but was especially attracted by our hymn-book, which was always on his guest-room table. With him Dr Robertson's friendship was immediate and constant, and both in the private rooms of the barracks and in the missionary compound they often shared meals. Their friendship continued after Dr Robertson had left Yenanfu. This was not only owing to the fact that the official was suffering from tuberculosis, and that the treatment was carried on by correspondence via myself for subsequent months, although this, of course, formed an extra link.

Just a few days before Dr Robertson left Yenanfu

I invited the military official and the county magistrate to a farewell banquet. The date was arranged so as to synchronise with the passing through Yenanfu of other missionaries. The hours that followed were full of enjoyable intercourse. Dr Robertson, I remember, remarked that this was the easy equivalent for much of our general social intercourse with friends at home. Dr Robertson afterwards sent, via myself, to the military official a copy of the photograph taken that day, and it afterwards adorned the walls of his guest-room.

In this branch of life Dr Robertson showed himself a full man, robust, generous, cultured, human, happy. Looking back, one cannot fail to see in all this friendly intercourse with the comparatively humble officials of Yenanfu the providential training of the man who, later in that same year, would be the associate of the highest officials of the province—first Imperial and later Republican.

One inference from the foregoing is that Dr Robertson's knowledge of the Chinese language was for one who had only been fifteen months in the country unusually good. He was one of those to whom you could hardly pass a compliment, but at the time I remember saying to him that it was positively uncanny. He certainly knew very much more than his text-book had taught him. Perhaps a doctor has, at the beginning of his Chinese career, more enforced conversation than his non-medical colleagues. And although the long and rambling remarks of patients have often little enough to do with their disease or its treatment, they are yet rich

in material for the student of the colloquial language. In any case Dr Robertson's notebook was never far away and in addresses and conversations he was always on the look out for new words and phrases.

But here is another evidence of the rapid progress he had made in language study. Early in his stay in Yenanfu he gave his first address in Chinese.

Doctors always seem to be the keenest evangelists. I have never known a medical missionary so engrossed in his work of healing that he was indifferent to that of preaching. Such men only exist in the fears of those of little faith.

I remember that first service very clearly. The language was a surprise. The pronunciation was distinct and accurate; the idiom unusually true, and the vocabulary really wealthy.

And what impression was made by his six weeks' residence in Yenanfu?

Some time before he went the opium patients approached me, expressing their desire to make some kind of presentation. They soon decided that it should take the form of a carved inscription—the Chinese equivalent of a printed address—to hang over the dispensary where the medical work was done.

Suggestions for the wording were invited. A phrase containing four characters in Wenli (the literary language) was required. The literal translation of the one ultimately accepted is: "Save world spent heart." It would not be doing any violence to the spirit of this inscription to translate it: "He saved others; himself

he could not save." And looking back now upon the choice of inscription it seems prophetic, "signifying by what death he should glorify God."

In smaller characters the names of the contributors were engraved. Had their wishes been carried out, there would have been great excitement and display on the occasion of the presentation. The Chinese love a festival of any kind, and it so happened that one of the patients was actually the principal bugler in the Yenanfu military band. They were all very disappointed when they discovered that Dr Robertson did not approve of a procession through the streets of the city, headed by a military band. The flourish of trumpets and beating of drums brought no pleasure to him. So in deference to his wishes this point was conceded and a simpler ceremony arranged.

In his response Dr Robertson took the opportunity of delivering an earnest Christian address, inviting the patients to a faith in the Saviour who would keep them from opium and every other evil.

And over the little dispensary in Yenanfu the inscription still hangs, the first he ever received, and for *the first piece of real medical missionary work ever done in North Shensi.*

At the time no one imagined that before another year passed the highest authorities in the provincial capital would count no honour too great to adequately recognise his services.

On Thursday evening (12th April) he bade farewell to his last batch of opium patients, handing them over

to my care. I well remember the earnest words he spoke to them then. On Friday morning at 4 A.M. he left Yenanfu to return to Sianfu. The furlough of the late Dr H. Stanley Jenkins was due, and the condition of his health demanded a speedy return to England, and so Dr Robertson hastened to relieve him.

It was characteristic that on the first day he covered two stages—*i.e.* sixty miles. He sent his own horse forward on the preceding day to wait at the end of the first stage; then he borrowed one from the military mandarin, who also arranged for refreshment to be prepared for him at the stage; and so by a relay of horses he saved one day. Towards the end of the journey he repeated the same feat. He arrived in Sianfu in time to receive from Dr Jenkins the responsibility for the medical work there. And he was still there when Dr Jenkins returned in the end of 1912 to do a few weeks' work together before both were transferred to the higher service.

As the record of Dr Robertson's life and work would never be complete without the story of what he did in Yenanfu, so the history of the Yenanfu mission could not be fully told without some account of that visit. The relation between Dr Robertson and Yenanfu was intimate and mutual. He bestowed great benefits on that city, and it, in its turn, had its share in training him.

North Shensi never left his thoughts. Later, when peace was restored, and the reopening of missionary work in North Shensi was again being seriously considered, it was thought well to concentrate the staff of

Suitechou and Yenanfu in one place, and a doctor was promised for the proposed reinforced station. Dr Robertson immediately volunteered. He was fast becoming the idol of Sianfu, the provincial capital. Many honours were heaped upon him, and he had acquired great influence. But he readily offered to leave the place of his fame for quiet work in a non-conspicuous sphere.

Nothing has been said of the benefit derived by the Yenanfu missionaries from his visit, and no words can express it. But that period stands out clearly in the memory as one of fellowship with one whose purity of character was not repellent, whose love was robust, whose life inspired the prayer:

> "O God, to us may Grace be given
> To follow in his train."

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST MILESTONE

LEST the revolution and a subsequent furlough should have rendered indistinct our memory of the results of the first of the years at present under review, one cannot probably do better than insert the actual report rendered to the Home Society at the time, which is as follows :—

In presenting the first annual report of the new Arthington Station at Yenanfu, I feel there is abundant cause for gratitude. Reaping has to some extent been combined with sowing ; many initial difficulties have not been so great as was anticipated ; more people than we can estimate have heard the Gospel for the first time ; large numbers have attended worship, and several are under regular instruction as candidates.

The branches of our new work are several, and each requires a word.

In our street preaching hall, which is situated at the very best part of the main street, we have been in direct contact with heathenism pure and simple. There is no definite market in Yenanfu, which means that every day, instead of on set days, those for miles around who wish to buy and sell come to the city for that purpose.

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

PROSPECTIVE BRIDES

Scholars of Yenanfu Mission Schools.

During preaching large crowds gather, and in attracting these I find my Bilhorn organ very effective; and during the year guests have been numerous who have come to talk to the evangelist about our object in coming to Yenanfu.

I have recently heard of several people living in outlying county towns who, on visits to our city, heard the Gospel. Here I think I should add a word in praise of the devotion and ability of the evangelist who is daily engaged in this work.

Our chapel is also in a prominent position, and easily accessible. Here our experience has varied somewhat. At first, for a month or two, there were very large numbers, crowding the building within and the yard without. After a month or two the numbers considerably decreased, and now for nearly two months the intense cold and the consequent sickness of many of our adherents has still further reduced our congregations—leaving us with a reliable attendance of about fifty on Sundays.

The week-night service on Thursdays and the daily morning services have been discontinued in favour of a meeting every evening (except Saturday and Sunday) for members, and learners, with a definite prepared course of instruction. Those meetings are well attended, and aim at the building up of those we have secured.

I may say that the free-will offerings lead me to entertain the hope that the chapel property may, in a few years, be transferred from the B.M.S. to the native Church.

The boys' school is made up of the children of adherents and of outsiders. The boys live and board at home, and so we have not been able to secure a large fee. But that is not surprising, seeing that the officials are offering large bribes to secure pupils for their own schools. We know of one man who left his work as cook to become a pupil, *in order to secure the larger salary*! The boys we have make us hopeful for the future; before long we may expect some members from amongst them.

To open a girls' school was real pioneer work, as there is no such institution within a radius of very many days' journey. During the half-year of the school's existence Mrs Borst-Smith has had eight pupils, four (including two daughters of an official) the children of people outside the Church. Those who had bound feet have since permitted my wife to unbind them, and so all now have natural feet. It would be very easy to increase the number of pupils, if, by having arrangements for boarding, we were able to take in children from the country.

It has not been easy in the first year to do women's work, and one reason is that my wife has not been able as yet to secure a Biblewoman. But when the weather has been favourable the Wednesday meeting has been fairly well attended, and a fair number of women have also attended the Sunday services.

Mrs Borst-Smith conducts a very encouraging children's service on Sunday afternoon, when about thirty children, including several heathen, listen with rapt attention to what is told them of the children's Saviour.

We have a small dispensary in which we have sought to help and heal some of the minor ills that flesh is heir to. We absolutely long for the day when the Society will be able to send a doctor to meet the great need, at which we can do little more than look helplessly.

During the year I have had a considerable amount of intercourse with the numerous Yenanfu officials. All have been very friendly, and some intimate. Perhaps much of the good will we have met everywhere is due to the obvious friendliness of the rulers.

Most of the above shows that, for this first year, our work has been largely local; and this has not only been necessitated by circumstances, but also beneficial—for the centre must be strong.

But in addition to Yenanfu we have out-stations at Fu Chow and Lo Chwan, outside the prefecture. In the former of these a very promising work has been done, and for the latter we have good hopes for next year.

The colporteurs of the British and Foreign Bible Society have traversed almost the entire district, even crossing the Great Wall and going into Mongolia, selling Gospels and preaching, and have done much to prepare the way for future itinerating work. The district is vast, and "there remains very much more land to be possessed."

CHAPTER VI

OTHER PEOPLE'S WORK: OUR ALLIES ACKNOWLEDGED

IT is, on the whole, the doom of the missionary that he has to write and speak largely about himself. The whole value of his testimony rests upon the fact that his evidence is first-hand. He is to an extent the man in the witness-box, and therefore cannot refrain from being personal. And yet there is great aid always available from other people's efforts, and it is our pleasure now to acknowledge this.

I have already claimed to be a pioneer—since I was the first Englishman ever to reside in North Shensi. My wife was the first European lady ever seen there, and my little girl the first non-Chinese baby ever born there—although we have been able to trace North Shensi history for over four thousand years. Even so, it was to some extent true of us that "others laboured" and "we entered into their labours."

Speaking generally, the Chinese people stay at home, and yet there are certain classes who have, of necessity, to travel. The official class is one of these. Until the revolution no man could hold rank in his own town, scarcely in his own province, and therefore he had to remove to another. No man could hold office anywhere for a lengthy period; thus his official career was one

long series of itinerations. To a smaller extent, there are other classes (as merchants) who also travel. Thus I have sometimes dared to suppose that as a result of these migrations there is probably no city of real importance throughout the length and breadth of this vast country but that, somewhere within its boundaries, if you could only find him, there is someone who, though he has never heard the Gospel there, has yet during his travels heard it *elsewhere*.

It should be stated, however, that when pioneer missionaries meet indications of other people's work it is usually of medical rather than of non-medical work, for the medical work is not only beneficent in its character, but very widespread in its influence. Recently, when in England, I heard the chairman of a meeting classify missionaries as "medical and ordinary"! And certainly in China the non-medical missionary finds it easy to regard himself as a very "ordinary" individual; he has no difficulty in learning humility; and it was our own experience that we were able to number on the list of our most intimate friends no fewer than five—all of whom held official rank—who at one time or other came and told us of kindness received at the hands of our doctors, either in distant parts of the same province or in other provinces.

I never had the pleasure of meeting Dr E. H. Edwards until my return to England in 1912, but I often met his grateful patients. The late Dr Stanley Jenkins never travelled into these northern hills, but I have hardly ever met a newly arrived official here who has not

received kindness at his hands. We have often felt keenly the great distance between ourselves and the capitals of Shansi and Shensi, where the doctors were. But we were glad they were there, for their influence reached here, and its value as an introduction was beyond expression. One of the hardest of initial difficulties is to find something in common between oneself and the people one hopes to influence. But when a man tells you that he is indebted either for his own or his friends' health to the kindness of a medical missionary elsewhere, then the introduction to him is over, and when that is so he is himself the best possible introduction to other people.

So influential has been the result of this one branch of work that it is hardly too much to maintain that it alone has made pioneering, in the fullest sense of that word, a present impossibility. The influence of kindness received has gone far and wide, removing prejudice before the missionary arrives.

But, further, we modern missionaries, even in new areas, live in a different intellectual and spiritual atmosphere from our predecessors. There is a receptivity and friendliness unknown in earlier days. And one of the principal causes of this new attitude is to be found in the results now accruing from the many years of silent yet effective work of the Christian Literature Society. On the whole, public opinion has been averse to the outward profession of Christianity. Most people in interior cities who have professed themselves Christian have had to face considerable opposition.

Yet this has not in any way militated against the acceptance and examination of Christian literature. Many a man who meanwhile has not been prepared to face the ostracism that would follow if he openly proclaimed himself a Christian, has yet in the privacy of his own home received and studied Christian literature. And this has had a cumulative effect, and is now discernible everywhere in a new spiritual atmosphere, a new receptivity.

Let me give a case in point. There is probably hardly an official in China, great or small, who is not familiar with the name of Dr Timothy Richard. I have indeed met people who had a somewhat vague idea as to who he is, and I once met a man who confused him with the Epistle to Timothy in the New Testament! But vague or clear, his name seems to have gone everywhere; it has always been associated with what is good and generous and noble, and one's introduction to a highly educated person is assured if one can claim some kind of connection with him. Other members of the Society to which he belongs add a cubit to their stature when they reflect on that fact; and I regard it as no exaggeration to say that to however remote an area in China a missionary may be appointed as a pioneer, he will find that somehow or other the influence of Dr Richard has been there before him.

And then there is no modern missionary who does not owe a great debt to one or other of the Bible Societies, and usually the Bible Societies' work has been in advance of him.

In a letter I recently received from Dr G. H. Bondfield, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he stated much less than the truth when he said : " We have felt it a privilege to be in partnership with you in the developments of your work in North Shensi." He might quite reasonably have claimed to be the senior partner, for colporteurs supported by the Bible Society's funds had traversed the whole area before we came.

We have one striking instance of the results of such work. There is, in the town of Chia Chou, about one hundred and forty miles north of Yenanfu, a small community of Christian people who have come to their faith quite independently of any foreign missionary. Some years ago a colporteur visited their neighbourhood and sold some Gospels. After he had gone one of their number was so impressed that he went many miles to where a missionary resided, to inquire more fully. On his return he preached to his relatives and neighbours, with the result that there is now an earnest band of devoted Christians. In the very middle of the White Wolf scare of the spring of 1914 I baptized six of them who had travelled the return journey of two hundred and eighty miles for that purpose.

But the Bible Society does more than prepare the way for the pioneer missionary ; it stays by his side. It is the same yesterday and to-day. A better example of Christian co-operation could not be imagined than that by which the Bible Society and the missionaries work ; and it deserves to be widely known.

Copies of the Scriptures and salaries for colporteurs

are supplied by the Bible Society to a local missionary of any society who, in return, undertakes to select suitable men, thoroughly superintend their work, and to arrange for wide and systematic itinerations. The colporteurs are under the control of the superintending missionary, who is expected not only to supervise their work, but watch their personal conduct, and to send an annual report to the Bible Society. There is thus no kind of overlapping, with its consequent wastage. Both the Bible Society and the Missionary Society obtain mutual help. The Missionary Society needs to spend no money for Gospels, and less for salaries than otherwise; while the Bible Society does not need to support foreign agents in the interior.

No acknowledgment of our allies in this service would be complete that did not include the British and Foreign Bible Society. They were before us, and are still with us, increasing our efficiency.

CHAPTER VII

INTERCOURSE WITH THE "CLASSES"

SOCIAL intercourse is the only way to reach certain classes of people. Public opinion, as has been pointed out, is averse to the attendance at Christian worship of officials and scholars; therefore, if public preaching were our only method of mission work, certain influential classes would remain outside our sphere of influence.

In the earlier days of Christian missions the educated and official classes of China stood largely aloof. But their reputation for aloofness has outlived the actual facts. The difficulty may be more imaginary than real. For myself, in any case, on starting a new work I decided to give every official in the city the opportunity of being friendly if he cared; the aloofness should not be mutual. And my experience was that when the first step was taken from our side, every one of them was willing to take the corresponding step from his, with the result that some of the Yenanfu officials became my most intimate friends. Before long the extreme etiquette —with its polite artificiality—was relaxed, and behind the more or less unreal manners was revealed the man of like passions with ourselves, ready to enter into friendly intercourse, eager for sympathy and appreciation.

No method is more effective in removing suspicion than this. How often has an official said this very thing to me. "Certain members of your staff speak to certain members of my staff, each giving distorted opinions, so that misunderstanding can easily arise, and a barrier is readily raised. But we meet face to face, and each is assured of the other's genuine friendliness." Mutual suspicion between missionary and mandarin works havoc, and any method by which it can be removed is well worth while. We have already shown that Yenanfu was, until the revolution, essentially an official city, and when we commenced work there in 1910 there were two civil magistrates and several army officers of various ranks. The term of an official is not long, and all except one of the Yenanfu mandarins were changed during our first period—thus increasing the number. Besides these, there were the teachers of the Government schools, and the local "gentry," as well as the staffs of "Yamen" secretaries, and the head of the local post office. All of these might be roughly included among the "classes," and to reach these the most effective method was social intercourse.

Here is to some extent the opportunity for the lighter moods. I have never met a Chinese official devoid of "the saving grace of humour." Is it not somewhat interesting how so thoroughly theological a phrase as "saving grace" has become connected with humour? Yet the combination certainly expresses truth; for no one can be totally depraved who possesses healthy humour. It has been said with great truth that Bunyan

might well have included it in his list of Gates into Mansoul; for there it is, and not infrequently it is standing ajar. Has not humour often "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens"? Certainly more things "have been wrought by it than this world dreams of."

With two successive prefects I had considerable intercourse. The latter of the two, among many others, turned to us during the great dangers of the revolution, and we were able to contribute to the saving of his life. Both of the county magistrates who came and went were entirely friendly. They knew something about the Gospel before they came to Yenanfu, and while here they were very frequent visitors to our house, and on many occasions shared our meals.

The official immediately subordinate to the "county" had often had intercourse with our missionaries at the capital, and his two bright little girls were among the first scholars of the Yenanfu girls' school.

One of the colonels was very ill at the time of our reaching Yenanfu, but he greatly appreciated the use of a deck-chair that I lent him during what proved to be the last days of his life. Another colonel—a very elderly man, who had spent almost all his official life somewhere in North Shensi, and therefore knew very little about the outside world—sent to me early one morning to inquire if I knew of any divination, power or

process by which I could discover who it was who had robbed him of thirty pounds. One was unable to render any assistance, but the request was an expression of friendliness.

When the former colonel died his post was taken by another, named Ren—a man of unusually progressive bent. He had previously been on the staff of H.E. Twan Fang, and when the latter retired from the Governorship of Shensi, Colonel Ren followed him and so spent some years near Shanghai and became as a result enamoured of much in foreign life. Not infrequently he borrowed my bicycle; he had a foreign saddle for his best horse, and possessed many things of foreign manufacture. He was of an attractive disposition and became my intimate friend.

His principal lieutenant, named Tsai, was a graduate of a modern military academy, and was a man of far beyond the average in scholarship and general attainments. The colonel and he, on several occasions, came to our services—the military officers being less fettered by custom than the civil officials.

One link between missionaries and officials is that both have come from without, and for that very reason may to some extent be said to represent progress. The outlook of neither is confined entirely to what is local. And anything that one has in common with any member of the community is worth turning to good account. No sort of success in this particular kind of work is likely unless one is prepared to take joyfully the spoiling of one's time—for very few Chinese have anything like

the same sense of its value as the average foreigner. But time thus spent is not lost in China, where graciousness and courtesy count for so much more than excitement and hurry.

In our own case, intercourse with the dignified Yenanfu officials of 1910–1911 prepared the way for dealing with those who usurped their offices in the autumn of 1911. We were taken at our own estimate as the not unnatural associates of those in power—and this gave us a position and influence otherwise unlikely during those days when strained and suspicious relations might well have proved disastrous.

Here, then, is one of many methods not to be neglected. It may be frankly admitted that the results of this method are not tangible, and do not result either in the crowding of the church at the usual services or in the decided increase of the church roll. Yet, even if the results achieved are not all that we could desire, is it not better that this whole class of people should become intelligent admirers of Christianity than that they should remain ignorantly hostile. To some at least it would be true to say: "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven." And a further result, the value of which can never be estimated, is that the spiritual climate experiences a subtle change. And if preaching to "the masses" is important, so also is intercourse with "the classes." "This ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

CHAPTER VIII

THE REIGN OF TERROR

THE story of the revolution in Shensi has been told with fulness and literary force by my friend, Rev. J. C. Keyte, M.A., in his book, *The Passing of the Dragon* (Hodder & Stoughton), and I have recorded the course of events during that time in the Yenanfu area in an earlier book, *Caught in the Chinese Revolution*. The briefest outline of what took place is therefore all that can be attempted, or is needed, here.

The first stage in Yenanfu was one of wild and unreasoning panic. No one knew exactly what had happened in the provincial capital, or the real meaning of the rising, though there soon seemed small doubt about the practical extermination of the vast Manchu population there. Rumours were, on many points, mutually conflicting, but none the less powerful. The general impression was that peace-loving citizens were in extreme danger of robbery and death; communications ceased, and during the first week of panic every day seemed a lifetime, and any hour might well have been our last.

At the end of that first week Colonel Ren—already referred to—who had been to us a source of comfort and tower of strength, felt it necessary to leave Yenanfu for

Sianfu, and his going was the sign for a strange turn of events. The day following his departure the office of the prefect was usurped by a local leader of a powerful secret society (the Elder Brother Society). This man, named Ch'ü (not to be confused with our church member of the same name), could neither read nor write, and had till then kept a small flour shop, sustaining his business largely through the patronage of our evangelist, school teacher and cook.

The violent nature of this change is beyond description. It involved the reversal of the whole social order. The prefect of the previous day suddenly became a pauper, while a miller of yesterday became the mayor of to-day. Though, during the ensuing days, I was sometimes diplomatic go-between, and consequently had frequent dealings with both of these men, I never was able to make myself realise that this change had actually been accomplished.

Justice, however, demands the explanation that the miller-magistrate was really more passive than active—his position in the secret society involving the responsibility of taking the step he did. And, to his great credit it should be said, he exerted himself to the utmost to keep order and peace—no small task, indeed, considering the character of his fellow "brethren."

When the feeling of "something going to happen" passed on to the knowledge of what had happened, the strain was somewhat relieved. In fact, so much comfort was there during the first week of his reign that there were one or two nights during which some of the bolder

GUARDING THE AUTHOR'S HOUSE DURING
THE EARLY DAYS OF THE REIGN OF TERROR

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

THE ADAPTED CHINESE BUILDINGS IN WHICH THE AUTHOR LIVES

souls ventured to snatch a little sleep. But not many, for just six days later another leader of the same secret society came forward demanding the head military office, as the miller had demanded the head civil office. And this second man, named Hsie, was of a different type. He loved strife for its own sake, altogether apart from the gains that it brought. He was neither more nor less than a violent, unscrupulous and desperate ruffian. From the time he assumed power deeds of violence became hourly occurrences; the possessions of those who had any were demanded at the point of the sword, and panic reached its extreme limit. It may be left for psychologists to explain how panic so intense in quality could continue for so long a period. The strain was certainly unrelieved for many weeks, and some of the oldest inhabitants of the city who remembered the Mohammedan Rebellion, which, as we have already recorded, so completely devastated the province that afterwards there were not enough men to till the fields, said that even the panic of those days was not comparable to that of the autumn of 1911.

In his extreme hate and violence this man Hsie went far beyond the rank and file of his society—robbers though most of them were. More than once he was restrained by the entreaties of the others. Once the miller-magistrate, as well as the remaining elderly colonel, and the local gentry, pleaded with him on their knees to desist from his programme of wholesale plunder. At length (on Tuesday, 19th December 1911, and three days after we had been compelled to leave) the extreme

limit of endurance was reached. He had his bugles blown, calling his soldiers (practically all members of the Elder Brother Society) to prepare to loot and kill.

There was no *organised* opposition, and no *recognised* leader. But every man in Yenanfu seemed at last possessed of one purpose—that of resistance to the usurper Hsie. Each went for his sword (if he had one), or chopper, or club, or anything, and, without signal of any sort, assembled outside the barracks. They took his usurped seals away, compelling an elderly lieutenant to accept them, struck him with a sword, extracted from him information regarding the stolen wealth, and finally decapitated him.

In one of the inns near the south gate of the city there was another leader of the secret society named Liu. Just a week or two previously he had led an attack on Suitechou,[1] hoping to obtain the position of the official there. This attack was, owing to the bravery of the local militia, unsuccessful, and most of his followers were killed—he himself just escaping. The people of Yenanfu, now possessed of a sense of power, felt that peace would not be permanent while this man was at large in their midst. They therefore captured him. But no difficulty was presented. Most of these men have already counted the cost, and, if called upon to pay it, face death without fear. He gave a sum equalling thirty shillings to his captors as a bribe to hasten the end, and surrendered. Arriving at the bell tower, it

[1] *Passing of the Dragon*, by J. C. Keyte, M.A.; *Caught in the Chinese Revolution*, by E. F. Borst-Smith.

was some time before anyone was found willing to undertake the task of executing him. This was at length performed, however, and so practically ended the Reign of Terror. It was not without some regret that one heard of the death of this last-mentioned man, for, highway robber though he was, he was not lacking certain good points; and in the frequent dealings I had with him he was always courteous, and had it not been for the ruffian Hsic he might have been spared.

Shortly afterwards the miller-mandarin was also put in prison. But the restraint that marked his usurpation of the prefectural office was rewarded by the sparing of his life, and he became later a sergeant in the Sianfu army.

For some weeks preceding these events I had been keeping Lieutenant Tsai, mentioned already as the right-hand man of Colonel Ren, in hiding in the small room previously occupied by my wife's sewing women. He had been guilty of the crime of suppressing gambling amongst the soldiers, and of obtaining some kind of military discipline and thoroughness! It had, in earlier months, been a sight to make one proud, to see the soldiers drilling under his instruction. But when the rabble were in power his life was sought. When on Saturday, 16th December, three days before the great retribution, and one day before the Shensi Relief Expedition reached Yenanfu, debt and practical destitution compelled my wife and myself with our little one to commence the ten days' journey to Sianfu, we secured a new hiding-place for Lieutenant Tsai. In the following

few days, however, the execution of Hsie and Liu made further hiding unnecessary, and so he again walked the streets without fear.

It was not long, however, before he received a letter from his colonel, then in Sianfu, informing him that a good appointment awaited him in the capital. He proceeded safely as far south as Lo Chwan (three days), but there some of his old enemies heard of his presence, surrounded him outside the South Gate and murdered him.

Lieutenant Tsai was one of the type of men that the republic could least spare. While in the academy in Taiyuanfu he had received kindness, which he often spoke about, at the hands of Dr E. H. Edwards; he not infrequently attended our services; and I had often thought regarding him that he was "not far from the Kingdom." I clearly remember noticing him in our chapel on the morning of Saturday, 21st October, the day before the revolution broke out in Sianfu, on the occasion of special services, and I thought of him as I pointed out that the Apostolic circle included a man (Simon the Zealot) who was earlier a member of a revolutionary society. Little did I then dream that on the very next day the revolutionaries would commence operations in Sianfu, and still far less that reputable and educated and patriotic revolutionaries would speedily be menaced, not by their Manchu enemies, but by the robber rabble who soon joined and characterised their movement. There was probably no man in North Shensi at the time more capable than

Lieutenant Tsai of leading the local revolution. And had the task been entrusted to him, and had his following been sufficiently powerful, the movement would have been marked by a discipline and dignity unhappily quite unknown to it.

Then there was another man—in almost every way the contrast of Lieutenant Tsai—whose story is linked with that of our Yenanfu church and with the local rebellion. Kwo Teh Sheng had been deported to Yenanfu for some crime of earlier years. Like most of the outcasts, he became a member of the Elder Brother Society; but, unlike most, he came fairly regularly to our Church services. He was quite illiterate, and smoked opium. He entered the opium refuge which was opened during the brief visit of the late Dr Robertson. His undisciplined nature found the necessary restrictions of the refuge somewhat exacting, and he did not hesitate to break the rules. Dr Robertson and I decided that, for the sake of the others, he should be expelled; but later, owing to his genuine sorrow, and perhaps also to something really attractive about this rough character, he was permitted to return, and his is among the names of grateful patients carved on the inscription presented to Dr Robertson and still hanging here.

When the flour-seller suddenly became prefect, Kwo Teh Sheng became his right-hand man. On one of the nights that seemed most likely to be our last he was heard to say to a member of the hooligans who made up the rank and file: "We must carry on our movement

according to rules, and abstain from unreasonable violence." And, rough as he was, I have never heard of anything he did in violation of that principle.

But shortly after the execution of Hsie and Liu, and the subsequent imprisonment of the miller, Kwo Teh Sheng was nowhere to be found. Then suspicions began to arise that he might, after possible collusion with the miller, have gone to gather "Elder Brother" forces to revenge the execution of Hsie and Liu. Little or no raw material of fact is required in China for the manufacture of the wildest assertions. Before long this was the accepted explanation of his absence, and the order went out to search for him everywhere and either kill or bring him bound to Yenanfu.

He was captured at the city of Kan Chaun, thirty miles south of Yenanfu, and brought here. Then the people were undecided. It is true he was among the leaders of the dreaded society, but what actual crime was there to be debited to his own personal account? He would almost certainly in the end have been released, but for the fact that a man from a village near by (one of those, as a matter of fact, who had joined the Yenanfu church before our residence there, and whom it had been our plain though painful duty to excommunicate) incited a section of the people, as he had done on many another occasion, to demand his death; whereupon the sentence was passed. Kwo Teh Sheng was joyful to the last, requesting the favour of an appetising meal for once, and afterwards engaging in conversation with bystanders.

I have already said that on Saturday, 16th December, after two months of the Reign of Terror, my wife, little one and I took to the road with the hope of reaching Sianfu. Thirty-six hours later the Shensi Relief Expedition reached Yenanfu, and heavily bribed a special messenger to overtake us with news of their existence and arrival. They overtook us near the city of Fu Chow, and escorted us to Sianfu, where the party, after being augmented by many other missionaries, proceeded to Peking. But of the courageous rescuers who came to us, of our adventures in the wake of a conquering and in the path of a retreating army, of how a battle was postponed till we had passed through the lines—all these things are set down elsewhere,[1] and so do not require repetition here.

We then went to England on furlough, leaving the work in the charge of Chinese evangelists, of whose fidelity more will be recorded later.

[1] *Caught in the Chinese Revolution* (Unwin).

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

THE RETURN JOURNEY: DANGERS, DIFFICULTIES, DELAYS

THE missionary on deputation work receives interesting and varying instructions before rising to address certain audiences. After receiving these he probably proceeds to deliver the exact address he had previously prepared. For he has at least this advantage over his advisers: he knows more about his own story.

"Our people do not want *geography* or *history*, they only want to know about *conversions*," was the written advice once sent to me before arriving at a certain church, by its minister. And, it must be acknowledged, the letter throughout breathed a highly spiritual tone. But it failed to take account of the simple fact that before that inspiring story of conversions can be told the missionary must at least *get there*. Let us begin at the beginning, and the first thing in missionary work is not conversions, but the more mundane task of reaching the place. The audience in question did not desire geography, but it obviously needed it, and (need I add ?) received it—and that without undue shock.

Physical geography may be a thoroughly secular science, but it has a very real bearing on the sacred work of missions. And supporters of missions will fail to understand the conditions under which their work is being carried on abroad unless they are willing to give some attention to the difficulty of distance.

Why should we be afraid of geography? Our Bible almost opens with the statement that it was God who made the world. If our constitutional objection to geography has led us to omit all the geographical references in the Acts of the Apostles, we certainly understand very little of that Book.

At the close of furlough we travelled by the most direct route to Yenanfu, and a somewhat detailed description of the inland journey will give readers an idea of the difficulties, dangers and delays consequent on the distance of Yenanfu from the railway. The dangers that will be recounted here have nothing to do with the revolution or with robbers, though such seemed likely. Letters received in Tientsin, on one's arriving there from England, differed in their advice, according to the date on which they were written. Some said that the north of the province of Shensi was in a state of rebellion, that foreigners had been forbidden to proceed there by the Foreign Office in the provincial capital. And indeed a Spanish Catholic priest had recently been killed there, though by what method it was impossible to know.

Rumours at the coast about the condition of things in the interior were as usual conflicting, but they were

fairly consistent so far; there was increasing unrest and lawlessness in several provinces, of which Shensi was one. Some letters, however, spoke much more hopefully; and as our duty lay there we decided to take the first stage. Our party included my wife, our little girl of two years and little boy of four months, and myself.

The railway to Taiyuanfu had been damaged by unusual floods, and trains had not been running there for two months. At Tientsin no reliable information was available regarding the state of the line, though there seemed the likelihood of an unpropitious start. We were, however, fortunate enough to find ourselves on one of the first trains to go through to Taiyuanfu. Had we started earlier, we should probably have arrived later; for only a day or two before Shou Yang, fifty miles short of Taiyuanfu, had been the terminus, and passengers had had to detrain there and proceed the rest of the journey by road.

The real journey to North Shensi begins at Taiyuanfu, which may be regarded from the point of view of the time required as the half-way house between London and Yenanfu, as the following facts will show. At Taiyuanfu we met a lady friend who was about to start for London, and she and we left Taiyuanfu at the same time. But the ten thousand miles which divided her from London was travelled in less time than it took us to accomplish our three hundred miles to Yenanfu.

It was not easy to decide upon the method of travel. Carts were out of the question, the roads being too

narrow for anything on wheels. Mule-litters or sedan-chairs were, therefore, the only alternatives. Recent experiences of some of our friends in mule-litters made us regard these only as a last resort. Sedan-chairs were fast becoming obsolete in Taiyuanfu. Chairs which cost seven pounds could be bought for two pounds, and chair-bearers were swelling the ranks of the unemployed. Thus travel by sedan-chair was rendered much cheaper than in pre-republican days.

Our whole journey from here lay over the same route that Ch'in Shih Hwang, the Napoleon of China, took more than two thousand years ago. For the first three days west of Taiyuanfu the roads are flat, and would not have been difficult but for the frequent detours rendered necessary by the recent floods.

On the wall of the first inn at which we stopped we saw the signatures of the members of the Shensi Relief Expedition which two years earlier took the whole of this journey to save our lives, and thoughts of gratitude to them were revived by the recollection that we were taking their route.

After Fen Chow Fu is passed the mountains have to be entered and adventure is possible at every step.

The official at Fen Chow Fu granted us an escort, a mounted soldier, as the district we were about to travel had recently been disturbed by a renewed and successful attempt to exterminate the poppy. From the first we thought the horse was superfluous, for it almost monopolised the soldier's care. This impression was confirmed when evening approached and the soldier rode

forward so as to arrive at the day's destination before the darkness was too dense. We ourselves were left in a narrow gorge covered with innumerable rocks, as though they had been showered by the thousand from the sky. In daylight this section could only be travelled with the utmost difficulty, in the blackness of a moonless night every step presented the greatest possible danger, and the opinion of a well-known traveller, expressed to us as we left the coast, that wild animals, so numerous in those parts, only attacked *hunters* was not without comfort. In any case it was with unutterable relief that we at last reached a hut in which we could stay the night. We found our escort comfortably awaiting our arrival!

On the following day much of the journey was along a ledge, worn or cut out of the mountain, sometimes only two or three feet wide, and even then often broken, with a sheer drop of dozens, and at times hundreds, of feet on one side and an equal rise on the other. Our escort, somewhat ashamed of his conduct of the preceding day, rode or led his horse immediately in front of my chair.

Towards midday, as we came to a slightly wider part of the road, we encountered two cows being driven in our direction. At first sight of these the horse shied, threw his rider, who in some miraculous way extricated himself from the stirrups, and leapt over into the rocky abyss. When we were able to climb down within sight we found the horse already dead. This happened within two feet of our first chair-bearer, who might

easily have been kicked and our chair thrown over the precipice. Our little girl, who had ridden the horse the afternoon before, was not thoroughly comforted for many days, and for several subsequent months frequently recalled the incident.

It was the following day that in a fairly narrow path we encountered a train of mules, the front one of which was very nervous. When we attempted to approach, he shied, struggled violently, and threw off his load, and was within very few inches of dashing into us. After a time, however, we were able to discover another path and so pass by at a safe distance.

Dangers of the kind just recounted, however, leave the chair-bearers unexcited. The only time when they really displayed fear was at the sight of water. Rather than wade through water of a few inches deep they would make long detours, climb seemingly impossible places, and perform all kinds of acrobatic feats, such as walking on a round, narrow and moving pole. Indeed the only European approximation to a chair-bearer is the acrobat. And the thing that makes the ordinary mortal's heart come into his mouth presents an irresistible appeal to them. Once, and only once, we encountered water of fully a foot deep and ten yards wide, which was quite unescapable. There were no stepping-stones, no plank or tight-rope, far less a bridge or raft. Chairs were placed on the ground; lengthy consultations were commenced; every possible alternative was discussed. Despair was written on every face. At long last one man proceeded to take off his

shoes and stockings, and in due course one or two others did the same. I ventured to suggest that since crossing with bare feet was inevitable it had better be done briskly and so avoid the risk of cold. But this advice was regarded as that of youth and inexperience, and was accordingly disdained. Long after all the shoes and stockings were off, the bearers still made no move to lift the chairs. One's first impulse might have been to ridicule this delay ; but one had learned years before that there are few things in China that have not some sane reason behind them. And indeed were they not much less likely to get cramp if their feet cooled slowly than if they went into the very cold water immediately after quick walking ? I am convinced that if the chair-bearers were to review the whole journey and tell their experiences the crossing of that small stream would rank as the greatest hardship. It would be impossible to recount the many and varied ingenious designs, often involving, as we thought, risk to our limbs, that were resorted to to avoid an inch or two of water.

Our escort was changed from time to time, that is as we entered into a new county, and a certain gradation was observable. Our first escort had a gun with cartridges. The second had a gun without cartridges, the moral effect of the sight of the gun being considered sufficient for possible robbers. The third only had a big stick. Obviously we were leaving modern civilisation behind and approaching " hidden Shensi " ! As soon as we crossed the Yellow River and entered upon Shensi soil our protectors carried the rough sword so

prominent during the fighting days of 1911 and 1912.

In reviewing the entire journey one is convinced that life is preserved only by the prevention of certain coincidents. Separate incidents were sufficient to endanger life a dozen times over, if they combined in a certain way. For instance, the roads are sometimes not more than two feet wide, and even then are often broken away ; herds of cows and trains of mules and camels are frequently met ; the chairs are sometimes suspended over a precipice of hundreds of feet ; they not infrequently break and are dropped, indeed the strings that hold them often snap. Here is surely sufficient raw material for many fatal accidents. Preservation lay in the isolation of these incidents. Were they to become coincidents there would be no chance of life.

And, for explanation, one is driven back upon the old theory that " man is immortal till his work is done." Such miracles do not require the suspension or arbitrary alteration of the laws of the universe, but rather the controlling and timing of ordinary events—in a word, Providence.

We arrived safely on 4th November, to find ourselves preceded by a fortnight by Rev. John and Mrs Shields, newly appointed to Yenanfu as our colleagues.

The welcome that awaited us did not lack indications that the service we had been able to render the community during the Reign of Terror that obtained in the closing months of 1911 had been appreciated.

A Chinese Mounted Soldier

Note the shortened stirrup.

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

Yenanfu Soldiers

The descent of the West Hill, with city wall on top, can be traced in background.

CHAPTER II

THE RESULTS OF THE INTERREGNUM

WHEN we were compelled to leave Yenanfu in December, 1911, everything seemed disorganised, to say the least. The hope was vaguely cherished that at some distant time missionary work would be re-begun, but it was too much to expect to begin again where one left off. What had been gained seemed lost in the general break-up.

It was late October, 1913, before residence in Yenanfu for foreigners was considered even moderately safe, so far is it from the beaten track.

The time was then past for the usual half-yearly united meetings with the preachers, members and associates. Yet no better opening of the second chapter of the Yenanfu work could be conceived than some such gathering, so the invitation was sent out. Meetings were held all day from 7.30 A.M. till 9 P.M. on Saturday and Sunday, 22nd and 23rd November, with only short intervals for meals. The public services were preceded and followed by a day of intercourse. These meetings afford a suitable vantage ground from which to review the progress already achieved at Yenanfu, and to estimate the future prospects.

Six men walked ninety English miles each way, over

high mountains; twelve came sixty; four others came thirty; several, including some women, twenty miles. This sentence may seem somewhat secular, but its significance is entirely spiritual. It would be easier for an Englishman in times of peace to go from London to Moscow than for these learners to travel to their central station. Those from a distance were the guests of the local church members, who bore the entire expense of their entertainment.

The house which three years ago we converted into a chapel by knocking down all the interior partitions, and which at the time was considered far too large for the purpose, was crowded at every service, and would have been had it been three times as large. For there were already in the Yenanfu parish, which is about as big as Wales, some two hundred people who had already entered the outer court—*i.e.* who regularly attended worship at one or other of the four local centres—besides the general public who were often well represented at our services, and who were entirely friendly.

On the afternoon of the first day it was my pleasure to baptize twelve persons—two women and ten men. None of these could have satisfactorily passed an examination in dogmatic theology, but each one gave clear evidence of love and loyalty to the New Master whom they professed themselves willing to follow, even at cost.

Not one atom of material advantage of any kind was offered to any of these, rather the reverse; yet my suggestion that it might be well to wait until the

following assembly before baptism was in two cases met by the question, why obedience to so obvious a command of the Master's should be postponed for half-a-year. And there are many others now preparing for a similar step.

One of the most promising signs of the Yenanfu Christians is the sense of responsibility that marks them. There were then three out-stations. In only one of these were there baptized members, but every one of the out-stations sent contributions. And liberality is admittedly not a heathen virtue.

The term "rice Christian" is accurate of them, as well as picturesque, but they *give* the rice. And on this occasion some, too poor to give either cash, flour or rice, gave firewood. That Christianity means giving is installed into their minds from the first. The united contributions at these meetings reached £8, 10s., and this is one of the very poorest districts in the whole of China. What is involved in that sum, from those people, can never be fully felt by European or American readers. It means, among other things, this: that this church gathered in three years from heathenism already raised enough to support its own pastor, if it chose to adopt that form of expenditure.

A contrast irresistibly and incessantly forced itself in the front of one's mind. As recently as February, 1910, the only approach to Christian worship in the whole Yenanfu area was when each Sunday one man (Mr Ch'ü) with his little boy went to the small room that had been procured for worship, struck the bell a few

times, knelt in prayer and then departed. None of the three out-stations, Kan Chuan, Fu Chow and Lo Chwan (each a day's journey south of the others), was occupied. Yet before 1913 closed there was a church of fifty members, whose Christian giving far exceeds that of communities many times its size.

And how did it come about? It was not entirely or principally because of the foreign missionary. He used what insight he could in choosing Chinese helpers. He sought to initiate, to instruct and inspire; and he hopes that the foundations were well and truly laid. But he was on furlough for the latter half of the time.

It was not on account of the popularity that came to the Church on account of the day of prayer instituted by the Chinese Government. For although its spiritual force must have extended there, the day of prayer was never heard of in Yenanfu or district. If the communication was received by the local official, it was suppressed.

It was not because of official favour, for the magistrate who had resided here during the interregnum had made no attempt to hide his hostility to Christianity.

Under God, it was due to the faithfulness, industry and enthusiasm of the two gifted Chinese helpers who were left in charge. Mr Ch'ü, who in spite of scorn and opposition week by week struck the bell and knelt in the small room for prayer, and the evangelist, Mr Ching, who accompanied me from our older work in San Yuan, are as different from each other as Peter and John, and as true. If the story of their life and work could be fully known it would move the home churches as did

the story of Pastor Hsi, to whom they are hardly second.

The Chinese Church of the future (and the not very distant future) will be taught and led by Chinamen. That is sound doctrine and sure prophecy. But better still : we already know some of the men who are worthy to take their part. But of these more will be told later.

Then the revolution, with all the hooliganism that was associated with it in North Shensi, did not destroy the young Church there. Rather was that brave word that we sometimes sing illustrated and fulfilled :

> " Crowns and thrones may perish,
> Kingdoms rise and wane,
> But the Church of Jesus
> Constant will remain."

CHAPTER III

CHINESE CHRISTIAN LEADERS

"ONE of the principal findings of the epoch-making conferences that Dr Mott has been conducting in the Far East is that there are some Chinese who can take their place beside our own men in important deliberations," so said one of the front rank leaders of the missionary enterprise in England. That fact has dawned upon home churches with all the wonder of a new discovery. On the actual field it has surely been a commonplace for many years. In any case the subject is extremely important. However pressing may be the need for foreign reinforcements, it is not nearly so vital as the discovery and training of leaders belonging to the country itself. The foreign missionary must decrease, the Chinese leader must increase, or the Church in the mission field has no future.

The average Anglo-Saxon has not been marked by undue humility in his estimate of Eastern character. Too often has the word "uncivilised" been used when "differently civilised" would better express the difference between East and West. And one result of this lack of perception has been ignorance of the wealth of character to be discovered in China.

China is from every point of view a land of untapped resources. It has been estimated that in our neighbouring province of Shansi there is enough coal to supply the needs of the world for a thousand years.[1] In the very near neighbourhood of Yenanfu oil has been discovered, and experts have stated that it is likely to become one of the largest oil-fields in the world. But may it not happen that the next discovery will be, not that of material wealth, but of character and ability.

I am personally not a believer in what is often spoken of as a Yellow Peril. I think it is inconceivable that either in this or any other generation the Chinese nation should make any naval or military aggression into other countries. That is not their genius. The Chinese are conservative by constitution and history. Any peril that is at all possible will be either industrial or commercial, and that may not in the long run prove to be a peril. But what I do wish to make clear here is that there are people in China who from many points of view are easily our equals.

The new Yenanfu work had the advantage of three such Chinese leaders. To explain the early progress of the work here without reference to these three men would be the equivalent of accounting for the erection of a building without acknowledging the leading workmen. In giving some sketch of these three helpers I am anxious to avoid the mistake sometimes made of suggesting that on the foreign field the Christians exhibit

[1] *The Shansi Coal Supply Analytically Examined*, by Professor E. T. Nyström.

a loftiness of character and depth of consecration entirely unknown in Christian lands, as though, so to speak, they have been dropped down from heaven, ready made and perfect. I have no theory to prove, except that which best explains the fact, and that is there are in the Chinese Church men with intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities such as make us hopeful for its future.

1. *Mr Chung.* Most China missionaries are simply helpless without a reliable Chinese as right-hand man. And so, when I was invited to commence work in an entirely new area, the finding of some such man became one of my first concerns. Happily for me, I had for two years been working amongst the older Shensi churches that cluster around Gospel Village, and so was in constant communication with the officers and workers. Scholarship, statesmanship, eloquence and enthusiasm were amongst the many qualities one wished to find combined in his future helper. My then senior colleague, the Rev. John Bell, whose keen insight into character is proverbial amongst us, was at that time also expecting to occupy a new station in North Shensi. After I failed to secure the first two men I invited, I noticed that Mr Bell had a second string to his bow—*i.e.* that he had Mr Chung in reserve, in case his first man failed. My friend Mr Bell was then good enough to relinquish Mr Chung to me. It was not with complete satisfaction that I launched forth with him as my chief lieutenant, for though no one could fail to be attracted by his sunny disposition, I knew he had not

Photo by *R. L. Wallace, Esq., C.E.*

TWO LOCAL CARTS BELONGING TO YENANFU

much technical scholarship. But one quickly discovered till then unimagined qualities and combinations, so that one would not now hesitate to describe him as out of sight the most valuable Chinese helper one has ever met.

He is a Christian of the second generation, a native of the province of Shantung. His father first heard the Gospel in 1879, before the famines and flood of the native province compelled so many to emigrate. For some time Mrs Chung, senior, strongly opposed her husband's allegiance to the new faith. In spite of this, however, their son (the subject of this sketch) was sent to the mission school at Weihsien. He was, unfortunately, unable to take full advantage of the excellent course there, as distress made emigration imperative for his family as for so many others. After arriving in Shensi the Chung family shared the varying experiences of the other emigrants, but into these it is not our purpose to enter. Mr Chung, senior, one of the very choicest of spirits, soon became one of the most potent spiritual forces in the church of the new colony, whilst his son worked hard for a few years in the fields. Later, when the people of their small village were able out of their poverty to raise sufficient funds for the establishment of a little school for their children, Mr Chung, junior, was chosen as their teacher. After a year or two this small school was superseded, and he had to find other employment. He then procured a weaving machine, and so earned his living for a time. Later on he was asked to do one month's work as a colporteur at a fair thirty

miles north of his home. He had no suitable clothes, but his father, whose one hope was to see his son a preacher, speedily helped him out of this difficulty, and still further helped to keep him at his new work as preacher by selling the weaving machine during his absence!

When the month was over he was sent elsewhere to act as a kind of apprentice to one of the senior evangelists, who was incidentally one of the best of Chinese preachers in Shensi. From this time he was put into positions of increasing responsibility, until, as has been mentioned, he attracted the attention of those about to commence new work.

He accompanied me on my first journey to Yenanfu in February, 1910. At the outset his principal sphere of influence was the street preaching hall in Yenanfu which we procured before nine o'clock in the morning following our arrival. This was a large open shop-front on the busiest part of the main street. It was easily and speedily converted into a preaching hall, with one end set apart as a reading-room, suitably furnished, and supplied with Christian and general literature. It is surprising how complete a transformation is effected when the old and dilapidated furniture is removed, and the walls and ceilings are newly white-washed and papered. Then when the walls are adorned with suitable texts and pictures, the preaching shop could command the same place in the life of Yenanfu as a good public library does in that of an English provincial town.

So much for the shop, but what of the preaching? This is where Mr Chung is at his best. Not that missionaries cannot preach to the promiscuous crowds that gather round. Some of them can do it very well indeed, and there is no more inspiring task than telling to those who thus come together and listen with open-mouthed wonder the story of the Father who loves them and awaits their return. But at this task the foreign missionary knows that he has his betters.

The singing of a few verses of some well-known hymn, accompanied by my Bilhorn organ, is sufficient to gather a crowd which more than fills the hall and overflows into the road near by. Then follows a spectacle to which I wish I could do justice. Mr Chung gets up, points to some picture, or text, impresses his audience with the fact that they knew all about it already if they only thought deeply enough, or else with the knowledge that for the first time in the long history of their honourable city they now hear a story that is as amazing as it is new, yet as true as it is wonderful. But whether the one or the other, they listen spellbound. Confucius and all the sages, common sayings and proverbs, manners and customs, seed-time and harvest, flood and drought, business tricks and empty etiquettes—all rush to the aid of this gifted master of assemblies. All serve as grist for his mill. As for the audience, they are at his mercy. They stay with open-mouthed wonder, riveted to the spot, as some of those old Confucian Pharisees begin to feel the badness of the best of them, and some of the tired farm labourers find

hope in the goodness of the worst of them, and as both hear how they may find all they need to perfect the one and purge the other in the Holy Love of the Saviour.

Occasional murmurings are heard of "Good doctrine!" "True words!" "Well spoken!" Heads are nodded in approval, near neighbours are nudged, erstwhile stolid faces are lit up with appreciation. Verily the common people hear him gladly. While the missionary is witnessing this spectacle and glorying in the triumph of his Chinese colleague, he begins to wonder what evil deceiver it was that led him to suppose he could preach.

And this goes on day after day. With what result? Who can tell? It is simply impossible to calculate even the number of those, leave alone the effect made on them who thus hear the message of love. And if some seed falls by the wayside, some on stony places, and some among thorns, yet enough will fall on good ground and produce rich results to more than justify the method.

But this by no means exhausts the work of Mr Chung. He has been indispensable in the purchase of mission property. There are innumerable ways in which the missionary would be completely at the mercy of ingenious tradesmen and workmen without a reliable right-hand man.

But perhaps his most valuable work is in the helping to lay the foundations of the new church. While an ideal associate of the foreign missionary, he sees quite clearly that the future church must be self-supporting and self-controlling. And sometimes when it would

seem meanness for the English missionary to ask contributions from poor associates, Mr Chung is able to do so with a grace and sweet reasonableness that is admirable. How much the Yenanfu church owes to Mr Chung it is impossible to estimate; but no account of that church can be thought of that omits some acknowledgment of that debt.

2. *Mr Ch'ü.* Mr Ch'ü has already been referred to as the net result of work before the residence of a foreign missionary. He is not a native of Yenanfu, but came here in 1892 at the age of twenty-four. His early life had been thoroughly bad. He was addicted to wine, and, to a smaller extent, to opium. He had never been to school, and so could neither read nor write. He was successful in business, but this was due not only to his industry, but also to his merciless harshness. His disposition was not at all attractive. He was proud, arrogant and strong, and out of the strong came forth no sweetness.

Almost as soon as there were representatives of Christianity in Yenanfu (1898) he became alert. For, although he was far too proud to be teachable, he was yet of an aggressive and inquiring turn of mind. He made frequent visits to those small gatherings to discover their purpose. His wife was a confirmed opium smoker, a complete victim to the habit, and this was even then troubling him. One day, when he was mentioning his anxiety to the evangelist who was temporarily there, the latter replied: "I will pray for you." This word marked the turning-point in his life.

"If you can pray for me, can I not pray for myself?" he inquired. "Certainly," he was told. He left the building that day to live a new life.

Like Paul, he did nothing by halves. He was as ardent on his new life as he had been on his old. By sheer power of will, now divinely reinforced, he quickly emptied his home of idols and all their associates. He also abandoned his wine and opium. His daughter's feet, which, in harmony with the quite universal custom in North Shensi, had been bound, he at once unbound, contrary to his wife's wish. In this, as in so much else, he was a pioneer. This girl was for years the only one in Yenanfu with natural-sized feet, and she was consequently the object of much ridicule.

At this time he set himself with great determination to learn to read. This is no mean task in China, where each word is a separate picture. But it was not long before he could read his New Testament and hymn-book fairly well, and during the succeeding years he has availed himself of every opportunity that has presented itself to further his education. The result is that he has developed a genuine love for books, and is always eager to know of new translations that are likely to help him.

In due course he was accepted, by correspondence, as ready for Church membership. For his baptism he went to Gospel Village—two hundred miles south of Yenanfu. While there he took the one day's farther journey to the provincial capital at Sianfu. He was treated with great cordiality by Rev. A. G. Shorrock, the senior Baptist missionary there. Mr Ch'ü had

never seen the residence of a foreigner before, with its cleanliness, its comfortable and cultured surroundings. Mr Shorrock invited him to dinner, and afterwards Mr Shorrock played the organ. This simple kindness made one of the deepest impressions of his life, and I have heard him retell it dozens of times. Ordinarily his voice and manner allow of no better description than of a Bull of Bashan. But in referring to that experience his tones become subdued.

He returned to Yenanfu with a new consciousness of importance, as of one who had been the familiar friend of kings. Had he not visited the capital of the province and dined with the senior Baptist missionary ?

I have never been without a fair amount of sympathy with the other and earlier adherents of the work here. And although they should never have been permitted to enter the Church, as by their conduct they proved that they had neither part nor lot in matters spiritual, and that their hopes and ideals were of an entirely material character, yet one cannot help feeling that they had much to endure from their latest energetic recruit.

But his irrepressible energy was not entirely confined to matters religious. The preacher and the postman, as will be shown later, have always been closely associated in Shensi. And so when in 1905 the post office authorities decided to open a route through North Shensi, Mr Ch'ü obtained charge of the Yenanfu branch office. The post office was then the latest outward,

visible sign of progress, and no more suitable or aggressive agent could possibly have been found.

In connection with his new post he often received the literature of the Christian Postman's Association, including an Almanac by Dr Hallock, of Shanghai. His Bible, hymn-book and Hallock's Almanac were never far away from him as he was gradually learning to read. He regarded all these, including the advertisement on the cover of the last, as equally inspired. For every Chinaman inherits a reverence for the printed page, and Mr Ch'ü had an altogether exaggerated belief in the veracity of every foreigner's statement, especially when printed. He read of the benefits of fresh air and cleanliness—the sure marks of lunacy in the estimate of most of his neighbours—and had extra windows made. Then, to the great despair of the other members of the family, bought an earthenware vessel to act as a bath!

On the cover of the Almanac he found an advertisement applauding the most miraculous potentialities of a certain well-known patent medicine, with a photograph of the famous manufacturer. At great expense —for Yenanfu is far off the beaten track, and no snowball increases its size as does the price of any foreign article as it slowly travels stage by stage to North Shensi—he procured a large supply of these pills. I well remember one day when he had delivered the mail at our house, and waited—with typical Chinese curiosity —to inquire about the contents, his whole face lighted up as he discovered on the outer page of the newspaper

I was opening the (to him) familiar photograph of the famous manufacturer of his favourite medicine.

The extent of his interest in all that concerns the Gospel sometimes gives one sudden surprise. It has already been said that the Yenanfu girls' school was really pioneering work. It was therefore often difficult to persuade parents to send their girls. One day, to our complete amazement, he invited Mr Chung, the head evangelist, to act as middleman and proceed to the home of an acquaintance, to inquire if he would be willing for his girl of fourteen years to become betrothed to his own boy, aged twelve years. It is common knowledge that those romantic transactions in China are always performed by parents, without any reference to the future husband and wife (who are usually very young and quite impartial !), and that go-betweens are entrusted with the negotiations. There was, it is true (from a Chinese point of view), no intrinsic unsuitability in the proposed match, but the one predominating reason for the proposal was to increase by one the number of girl scholars !

He has from the first been very liberal in his contributions towards Church funds. When any special effort is being made to raise money he will usually contribute a month's income. It may not be generally known that Chinese Christians are by treaty right exempt from certain temple taxes, although, of course, considerable ostracism usually accompanies the exemption. Mr Ch'ü at once decided that such financial relief should not be used personally, and so he contributed it

for Church purposes, thus setting an example which, with our members, has now become a custom.

Shortly before the revolution broke out I invited Mr Ch'ü to the post of assistant evangelist. During the interregnum consequent on the revolution he was therefore, with Mr Chung, in charge of all our interests in Yenanfu.

He has done his work with growing acceptance, preaching, indeed, in season and out of season. His industry is unflagging, and he rarely does an act that has not the ulterior motive of communicating the Gospel to someone.

His house, which is easily the neatest and cleanest Chinese house in Yenanfu, is adorned with texts, and thus he illustrates the divine combination of cleanliness and godliness.

One cannot say that he is marked by great humility, nor is his disposition of the sweetest. But in both of these directions there is an increasingly marked improvement. I have on several occasions known him suffer in silence and act magnanimously to some who sought to do him ill. The miracle of his absolute regeneration is not complete yet, but it is in progress. His salvation is nearer than when he believed, and nearer than when I first knew him. He has had, and is having, a worthy share in the Christian occupation of North Shensi.

3. *Mr Hou.* The third of my fellow-pioneers at Yenanfu is Mr Hou. Like Mr Chung, he is a Christian of the second generation, and was born in Shantung,

being brought to Shensi by his parents when he was a child of three years. He went to a small school in his own village for five years, and afterwards to the more central mission school in Gospel Village, where Revs. Moir Duncan, Evan Morgan and A. G. Shorrock had made their headquarters.

When, after 1900, it was possible for the missionaries to reside in the provincial capital, the principal school was transferred there, under the charge of Rev. A. G. Shorrock. Mr Hou was then one of the first pupils, and he stayed there four years, except for the interruption involved in a journey to and from Taiyuanfu.

The curriculum of Sianfu was practically that of the Government secondary schools, with the addition of a large amount of Christian teaching. The purpose of the school was not merely in a general way to prepare its pupils for the work of life, but in particular for the specific work of preaching and teaching. Mr Hou, whose record throughout his whole course was good, is one of those in whom the ideal of the school has been realised. After leaving he became teacher, first at one and then at another of the village Christian schools near his home.

Before starting for Yenanfu I knew from correspondence that there were a few lads, including those of Mr Ch'ü, who would be sent to a Christian school if such were established. In the course of itinerations amongst the country churches of my former district I therefore kept a look out for a suitable man for the new sphere. My choice was limited to a few, as both my wife and I

were anxious for a man whose wife had sufficient education to become, if necessary, a girls' school teacher. In Shensi it is only in the Christian Church that women are able to read at all; and the Christian schools had only been established a few years. The combination we required, therefore, considerably confined our area of choice. In due course I invited Mr Hou (whose wife is the daughter of the evangelist through whom Mr Ch'ü was led into the light, though I was not aware of that fact at the time) to accompany me on the preliminary journey already referred to. Although we agreed to the principle of not separating husband and wife, we thought it best, as property had not been secured, to postpone the actual removal for a few months.

As soon as we reached Yenanfu we discussed the future school and meanwhile accepted four pupils. These commenced their studies in the small house so frequently mentioned. When I came back with Mrs Borst-Smith six months later this number had increased to eight. This was for a man so well qualified as Mr Hou a day of small things; but a grain of mustard seed is also small. The boys' school has now increased and numbers thirty-five scholars, some of whom have since joined the Church.

But Mr Hou's work has been wider than the school. He has regularly helped several times a week at the street preaching hall, where his addresses have always been of a high order. I cannot recall any open-air meetings in England (of which the preaching hall

services are the practical equivalent) at which speeches have been at once as intellectual and fluent as Mr Hou's usual utterances. He also preaches occasionally at the regular services of the Church with very great acceptance.

In temperament he has a tendency to be despondent, and often takes a pessimistic view of things. Difficulties loom larger with him than with some. If Mr Chung might in some respects be compared with the Apostle John, and Mr Ch'ü with Simon the Zealot, then the apostolic parallel of Mr Hou would be Thomas. He needs detailed proof before he consents to be optimistic. Yet, as in the case of Thomas, his fidelity is not lessened by this. Those words of the apostle, "Let us also go that we may die with him," would come from Mr Hou without the least incongruity. In fact there were days towards the end of 1911 when death seemed the likeliest thing for us all, and I can remember Mr Hou devising ways and means of dying. But he did not die then, and has since lived to very good effect. During my absence in 1912 he was often looked to and trusted by people in distress. Without him Yenanfu would certainly have been the poorer.

That Messrs Chung, Ch'ü and Hou are worthy leaders is not mere speculation. For upwards of eighteen months Yenanfu was without any foreign missionary. And when we returned we found the whole work one decided step further on. Here in the character of the Chinese leaders is a promise of the permanence of the Church in China.

CHAPTER IV

SOME REPUBLICAN FIRST-FRUITS

TURNING now for a time from the Church to the State, shall we consider some immediate results of the revolution observable on our return to Yenanfu.

One sometimes wondered whether the revolution would really in the long run make any great difference off the beaten track. Would the influence of the centre extend to the circumference? The question is interesting enough and affords a real test of the effectiveness of the change of government. The average Chinaman is peace-loving and conservative. He is not interested in politics. It is a matter of indifference to him whether his country is called an empire or a republic. He would not know what to do with a vote if he had one. Knowing this, it seemed not unlikely that one would find with the restoration of law and order things would settle down so as not to be distinguishable from pre-revolution days. Would not the new order come about, if at all, rather by the imperceptible and slow process of evolution than by the catastrophic method of revolution?

In the course of a sixteen days' journey into the interior there was much to support this view. And

one has here at Yenanfu a daily further confirmation of it. During the summer of 1911, and about three months before the revolution, our street preaching hall was being redecorated. There were four panels over the doors that required ornament of some kind, and it occurred to me that it might be a good idea to show that Christians were no less loyal citizens on account of their Christianity. And so I had the four panels filled with the fourfold exhortation: "Fear God, *Honour the King*, Love the Brotherhood, Honour all men." And up to the present it has not occurred to anyone that the second exhortation is incompatible with a republican form of government, and it is not uncommon even now to hear sin defined as disobedience to the emperor's behests. In North Shensi at least the people are certainly not highly political.

And yet even here, in the most outlying part of one of the remotest provinces, *there are changes*, some beneficent, some otherwise, and it is the purpose of this chapter to indicate a few of these.

1. The soldier is much more prominent than formerly. The old-time classification of the people into scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants omitted him. But he cannot be ignored now. The shopkeepers are not prepared to display their wares, lest he should take a fancy to them; nor is it wise to dispatch them to, or receive them from, other towns, in case the soldier should believe (or at least state) the load to contain opium, and so confiscate it. One understands here, as no one in England or America has an opportunity of doing,

the meaning of that exhortation to soldiers: "Exact no more than your due."

Soldiers are sent to one's city and neighbourhood to keep peace, and you best help towards that desirable end by meeting all their wishes, even (as in my case) to the extent of taking their photo. The soldier is, meanwhile, an integral part of the new republic, and here, on the outskirts, we are in no danger of forgetting this fact.

2. Law-breakers are treated with summary justice. The notorious society of Righteous Harmony Fists (the Boxers) have long been known to have a large following in various parts of North Shensi. Fear of them has really left them unmolested. Not long ago one messenger brought news of the capture and impending execution of one of their leaders. A day or two later two colporteurs from another direction told of the actual shooting of a second. The Boxers have always claimed that they possessed charms with which to avoid violent death. This latter man was asked if he really possessed such. On claiming that he did, he was invited to use them; thereupon the official himself shot him, and improved the occasion by pointing out to the huge crowds that had assembled the futility of such claims. The country is becoming impatient of disorder, and disturbers of the peace meet with short shrift.

3. Another outward, visible sign of the republic is the foreign cap almost universally worn. At first it came as a mild shock to be greeted by old Chinese acquaint-

A Chinese Funeral Procession

Note the mourners wear white instead of black.

The First Woman Baptised in North Shensi

Note her feet are still 'bound', whereas the two Christian teachers with her (from another province) have 'natural' feet.

ances "cap in hand." And the confusion between long established habits and the scarcely acquired new custom is considerable on the part of polite visitors; they are never quite sure when to doff them and when to re-don them. In public worship some express their reverence by removing their caps, and those who retain them do not really mean to be irreverent. One has long been accustomed to the Chinese habit of borrowing crockery or furniture in the event of a function, but I must confess to a little surprise when a request to borrow my hat came from the manager of the leading bank. But after all there is nothing really incongruous in borrowing hats. It would be wicked waste to have supplies for both school and police when it is so simple for one detachment to go to bed while the other is on view.

The Chinese power of compromise has no better illustration than the combination of the Manchu queue and the republican cap. No other people can so make the best of both worlds. This combination produces an effect analogous to that of the Imperial-Republican stamps that were in vogue for the first two years of the republic. It is all very well to throw over a detested dynasty, but why waste good stamps when four added characters will meet the case? And why should a head with a queue not be surcharged with a foreign cap? You will recollect that China has produced a classic entitled *The Doctrine of the Mean*! And even the republic was established by Imperial edict.

4. The establishment of the people's kingdom has

already resulted in the appointment of officials of a humbler type. The gap between official and citizen has been considerably narrowed. The sedan-chair, without which it was not "proper" for an official to leave his residence, has become practically obsolete. The gorgeous official apparel of past days is no longer seen; etiquette has been greatly simplified, where it has survived at all.

The old Chinese habit of "squeeze" cannot be expected to disappear all at once, but the officials' salary is now fixed at an honourable and by no means exorbitant figure, a fact which greatly reduces the former tendency and temptation. In a word, the newer officials are men of like passions with the populace, with whom they are on terms of increasingly familiar intercourse. And they are much *younger* than their predecessors. Young China is so largely represented as to indicate that it will yet come to its own. A few years ago many of our mission schools had scholars as old as many modern magistrates.

Moreover, the prefectures have been abolished. The pre-revolution division of territory might, as we have already indicated, be stated in the form of an arithmetic table, thus: Ten counties equal one prefecture; seven prefectures make one province. But now every county is related directly to the provincial government, and the intermediate and very remunerative prefectural office has been abolished, to the great economy of the public purse.

Incidentally this greatly diminishes the dignity of

the city of Yenanfu. In ancient times it was a royal city; later it governed forty counties, then twenty, then ten, but even these ten equalled in area the principality of Wales. Now for the time being it becomes a mere county town. This is, however, but the darkness which precedes the dawn, for China will probably in the future be divided into circuits or prefectures *instead of provinces*, and Yenanfu will then govern one of these.[1]

To the great credit of the Chinese revolution it should be added that, even so far as this is from the beaten track, all the crudities of the earlier stages of the outbreak have disappeared. There are no remaining indications of the reign of Tom, Dick and Harry. Many of those who usurped offices at the beginning have since been executed, and all have been deposed. Moreover, all officials have now to proceed to Peking for examinations, and they will only be retained in office if successful. This arrangement will to a great extent revive the dignity of the magisterial office.

5. The new coinage has already been introduced. Ten cash copper coins (engraved with the republican flag) of the size of a penny, though only equal in value to a farthing, are in circulation, and are a great convenience. Formerly, in order to carry a sovereign's worth of Chinese cash a mule would have been required; now the inconvenience is not more than a tithe of what

[1] This new administrative division was placed in abeyance on account of the rebellion led by the White Wolf, and its accomplishment has since been delayed by more urgent concerns of State.

it was. Coins of this description have been for years in constant use near the railway ; but until recently they had not penetrated even to the capital of Shensi, far less to this remote part.

But an even greater boon has been the arrival of silver dollars, of the same value as the Mexican dollar, which equals (though the rate of exchange is always fluctuating) about two shillings. In the interior there have hitherto been no silver *coins*. The silver *unit* was an ounce, and lumps of silver of uncertain weight had to be weighed on silver scales for the payment of bills.

But then further complications began. Not only were the official weights of every county different; those of most shops also varied somewhat. Indeed it was the habit in many establishments to keep two sets of weights—viz. one for receiving, the other for issuing.

Still further difficulty usually arose over the quality of every piece of silver, the exchange into cash differing according to the colour. Then, too, the risk of fraud was considerable. Not infrequently these silver pieces would be opened, filled with an inferior metal, and then closed. A piece might thus pass through many hands undetected, until some day a careful tradesman filed through it before accepting it.

This older method still predominates, but that is because the present stocks of lump silver are not exhausted and the supply of dollars is not as yet adequate for all requirements. The saving of time and the avoidance of risk is, however, so great that there is already a most decided preference for dollars, and it is

safe to predict that, even in North Shensi, the time is not remote when they will entirely supersede the silver ingots.

6. The crusade against opium has gone on with even increased vigour.

The revolution seemed inopportune from the point of view of this reform. I well remember that on Monday morning, 23rd October 1911, at the very time when the fearful slaughter of the Manchus was proceeding in Sianfu (although the news had not then reached us), the head military official told me of the campaign against opium upon which he was about to start. Before many days he was escaping for his life and the campaign was abandoned. This is similar to what happened in dozens of places, and it is therefore quite understandable that farmers should take advantage of the abeyance of authority to cultivate so remunerative a crop, for it requires three ounces of silver to purchase one ounce of opium.

But as soon as order was established this reform not only made up for lost time, but advanced apace, so that during 1914 there was no opium cultivated on any of the *main roads of* Shensi. [1] It was even more than one's life was worth to attempt to send it from place to place.

Doubtless some was cultivated in isolated mountain

[1] Since these words were written there was a temporary recrudescence of opium-growing in some isolated parts of Shensi, owing to the connivance of an individual high official. But this is quite non-typical and already there is mention in the papers of the impeachment by censors of this official.

valleys and smuggled by various ingenious methods. But strict precautions were and are taken. Even coffins, which, in harmony with Chinese custom, are conveyed to the earlier home of the deceased, are regularly searched, unless they have an official passport, issued by the magistrate of the town where the death occurred. It is not unusual to see coffins *en route* with such passports pasted on to them.

The China post office mail-bag has been known to be opened, packed with opium, and resealed with a fictitious seal so as to avoid discovery at the customs offices on the provincial boundary; then reopened to take the opium out, and resealed for delivery at the post office. But it is dangerous traffic, and the days of the opium habit are certainly numbered.

7. There are suggestions of a democratic consciousness. I say "suggestions"; that is all, meanwhile. Towards the end of 1911, after a two months' reign of terror, and when oppression began to pass the last limit of endurance, the people of this city, as has been related, rose quite spontaneously, and without any leader killed or imprisoned their oppressors. Ex-officials became mere tools in their hands, and were compelled to assume responsibility or not as the people willed. The influence as well as the memory of that must last. The dangers of those days made the people come to recognise hitherto unrealised resources of authority and strength in themselves. That recognition will remain.

It may be true that the Chinese republic is a republic in *name* only. But the name may be used often enough to keep the *idea* in the front of people's minds. To impute righteousness may, after all, be the surest way of imparting it.

8. And lastly, there appears to be a new breadth of mind—a progressiveness of outlook. There is far less of suspicion and conservatism than we have been familiar with, and in its place there is teachableness and appreciation. People who hitherto stood aloof are seeking friendship.

The English language is now taught in the Government school, while the city rejoices in an English-speaking postmaster.

I know of two Chinese houses in Yenanfu where there is a bathroom. But perhaps it would not be fair to suggest that this was not possible under a monarchial government. In addition to these things there is on the main street of the city a store which has adopted the ambitious title, "Universal Provider," and although it has not succeeded meanwhile in living up to its name, it has in stock many things from England and America, previously unobtainable.

9. The foreign New Year has made a noble effort to secure a place for the sun in the Chinese calendar, which has hitherto been lunar. The official sends greetings on 1st January and the republican New Year is officially entered then. It is true that *for practical purposes* it is the Chinese New Year that counts, and we have had up to the present to fix the opening of our

schools according to it. But even here there has been a beginning.

And so the effects of the change of government at the centre are at least to some extent felt at the circumference, and they seem to augur still further changes. We hope the sum-total of them all will be for the good of China.

CHAPTER V

THE PREACHER AND THE POSTMAN

IT may seem that the preacher and the postman belong to totally different professions, that the missionary has nothing to do with the mail, that the title suggests an unnatural alliance. But you are neither a missionary, nor a missionary's near relative, if you think so. The postman, ever a welcome visitor at home, becomes a hundred times more so to the resident abroad. And do not most missionary magazines give some information about the mails?

In China the postman has followed the preacher. The older missionaries remember the days when their letters were conveyed by some old-time method to central towns, to which they themselves had to send messengers, often several days' journey, to collect their mail. But several years ago this method was superseded by the "China Imperial Post," which has, since the introduction of the republic, become the "Chinese Post Office."

But even in provincial capitals, on great highroads, the preacher was the pioneer, and he has been much more so off the beaten track.

When, in 1906, the district superintendent for the provinces of Shensi and Kansuh (usually abbreviated

Shenkan) purposed opening a route through North Shensi, he asked the missionary to recommend suitable men for the branch offices. And, for some time, the agents were all associates or members of the Christian Church, and are yet, in several cases.

In the city of Yenanfu our member, Mr Ch'ü, as has already been recorded, was for several years in charge of the post office, until he was appointed to the charge of the preaching hall, and the present English-speaking postmaster is one of the old boys of the mission school in Sianfu.

After coming to Yenanfu I on several occasions sent suggestions to the superintendent at Sianfu, founded on my knowledge of the district, and these were usually adopted.

For couriers there has been a distinct bias in favour of Christians, for it is important to secure men of reliable character. The salary, four shillings per week, is attractive to a man who would otherwise be a farmer; the income is more reliable than the harvest, and the work is lighter than farming. Several of the Christian couriers have, in course of time, become colporteurs, and there is surely nothing incongruous in the transition. It is not unfitting that the Master, who in the days of His flesh said to the fishermen by the lake of Galilee, "I will make you fishers of men," should say to couriers, "I will make you carriers of the message of God."

In Yenanfu for a long time—and the idea is still probably lurking about—it was supposed that both preaching hall and post office were under the same

auspices. I have often been applied to for positions in the post office. And the reason is probably that they have much in common; both preacher and postman stand for progress; both have come from outside the city walls; the influence of both is inconsistent with narrowness and ignorance; neither permits self-centredness. And if the postman belongs to the "Ministry of Communications,"[1] does not also the preacher?

The post office is making very rapid progress all over China, and one reason for this is that its policy is long-sighted. It is prepared for a great initial outlay,[2] with very small immediate return. China has suffered unspeakably for lack of this spirit. Enterprises have not been launched, because no profit will immediately accrue. Once the carter, after half-a-day's trouble, has succeeded in getting his mules and cart out of the mud-pit, he proceeds on his journey, and the next carter repeats the process. For it is not to the individual interest of either of them, once out, to fill up the pit and repair the road. If you ask, "Why does not the local official repair the road?" the answer is: "He will probably be there only about two years; he has waited many years for an appointment; he may not receive another; he has numerous relatives and friends who now attach themselves to him; he has to accumulate as much wealth as possible during his tenure of

[1] A few years ago the China Post Office was altered from a separate department and was included under the Board known as the "Ministry of Communications."

[2] By the end of 1914 the post office in Shensi had become self-supporting.

office. If he incurs expense for road-making, his successor, and not he, will receive the benefit." And it is all very true, and quite typical; but it is short-sighted and local; it is thought in terms of two years and of one county.

The post office is a striking contrast to all this. It is concerned with the future, and with the entire country. The Chinese republic, in this matter at least, thinks Imperially!

Let me give a few facts to indicate the rapid increase in the speed of the mails.

Seven years ago a letter from London to Yenanfu would have taken at least ten weeks, now it requires twenty-one days.[1] The first great saving is, of course, before it reaches China. In 1907 a letter required fully five weeks to reach Shanghai, and three more days to reach Peking; now, by the Siberian route from London to Peking requires only twelve days,[1] and before long even that time will shrink, for meanwhile the railway line across Siberia is single and very badly laid, and with inferior material. The laying of a double line, with improved workmanship and good materials, will easily subtract three days from the time now required.

But the speed into the heart of China has also been greatly accelerated. For one thing, the railway is gradually creeping nearer to Shensi. But not only so, the courier service is being developed to a surprising

[1] This was written before the European War, but it is remarkable that even that world-wide upheaval has only caused an extra seven days' delay.

degree, as the following facts about our North Shensi section will show.

Previously on the road from Sianfu to Yulinfu on the Great Wall, which is nearly five hundred miles each way, and on which Yenanfu is half-way, there were just four couriers for the return journey. They were expected to do one stage (about thirty miles) each day, weather and all things permitting! It is surprising how often Chinese rivers and roads make travel impossible. It therefore frequently happened that if one missed a post there was not another for ten days.

But on returning one heard of improvement and so, one day on meeting a courier I asked him how long the five hundred miles' stretch now took. He replied by asking another question: "Do you refer to the man or the mail?" Here was a subtle distinction hitherto unfamiliar in North Shensi. The postman and the package never parted company, and so used to travel at the same pace. But I learned that a system of relays had been adopted. The package does not stop day or night, though the postman still only walks his accustomed thirty miles each day. The mail-bag may now cover as many as five old-time stages in the course of twenty-four hours; and at Yenanfu there is at least one post every day from both north and south. This means that since the change of government the Shensi distances for purposes of postal communication, though not for personal travel, have shrunk to about a fifth.

Previously every "Yamen" had, at great expense, to keep several horses in readiness to pass on official

dispatches, which were then not entrusted to the post office. Now this system has been abolished, with great economy of both time and money.

The question will naturally arise: If Yenanfu is only twenty-four days from London for the mail, why does it require so long for the missionary? That subtle distinction between the man and the mail gives the key to an explanation. To start with, a traveller in China has to take all his luggage with him. His bedding, cooking and washing utensils, stores—if he indulges in such luxuries—must all be included. That means mules, possibly several. Probably the mules represent the muleteer's entire possessions, therefore he will be careful with them. He will be merciful to his beast, whether he is a merciful man or not. They must not do more than one recognised stage of about twenty-five miles per day, and however early the eager traveller arrives there, he must stop until the next day. Usually he is very glad to comply, for travel in China is fatiguing. Amongst the mules there is almost certainly at least one of them lame. This one marks the pace for the rest, and is usually placed in the van of the procession. The least bad weather will decrease the pace, if not call a halt. When a swollen river is reached there is no alternative but to wait until it is normal—which may be days, or even weeks. The man with the light mail will soon be able to cross in his foldable skin boat, which he carries with him.

After arriving at the end of each main section of the journey muleteers are paid and negotiations for a new

set are commenced. This will probably require several days. After leaving the rail-head, even in good circumstances, the traveller will therefore be about five times as long as a letter.

So much for letters. But many missionaries become far more interested in home movements, as a result of residence abroad, than ever they were while in the homeland. Distance lends enchantment to the view. And so *newspapers* become an absolute necessity. Unfortunately the pace of papers is much less than that of letters. With perhaps the solitary exception of *The Times*, all British papers are sent by the sea route, thus losing three weeks before reaching China. But it is really after this that their troubles begin. They go by the traveller's method of one stage per day, thus taking five times as long as a letter to cover a given distance. There is only one consignment each week, and not infrequently the papers most desired arrive just after one has left.

They are subject to all the delays of Chinese travel —which means that, in the summer and autumn, they are held up for many weeks in one place. Then the last are first, for the top ones of the accumulated papers are more accessible.

And perhaps here a little application may not be irrelevant. Some missionaries have friends who let the papers accumulate for a month and then send the four numbers all together, which means that after a period of starvation a supply which cannot possibly be digested arrives. One has often known a consignment

of twenty papers thus delivered at one time. The unaided Chinese post office is more than equal to the task of combining the issues of several separate weeks. "Day by day the manna fell," and the arrangement was excellent, involving neither starvation nor indigestion. And that is the way information reaches the British public. But missionaries who live in the wilds ought not to expect such perfection. Is not "week by week" a legitimate compromise?

But the preacher is getting the upper hand of the postman. Let us return to the paper post. On the whole, an average of ten weeks is sufficient for a London paper to reach Yenanfu; and so the friends of missionaries always enclose important paper cuttings in the letters, leaving the papers themselves to come in due course—seven weeks later.

The separation of an important cutting from the remainder of the paper has often had a pleasing effect. For instance, I had often wondered what it must be like to possess foreknowledge, until the different speed of letters and papers was adopted. Now it is quite a familiar experience. A concrete instance will illustrate. There was a famous budget introduced into the British House of Lords some years ago, and opinions were very various as to what would be its fate. I received a letter in splendid time, with a cutting telling the result. I knew what actually had happened. Then for seven consecutive weeks my papers gradually came. One regarded a certain action as unthinkable, another asserted precedent forbade it, while another claimed to

COLPORTEURS STARTING ON A JOURNEY

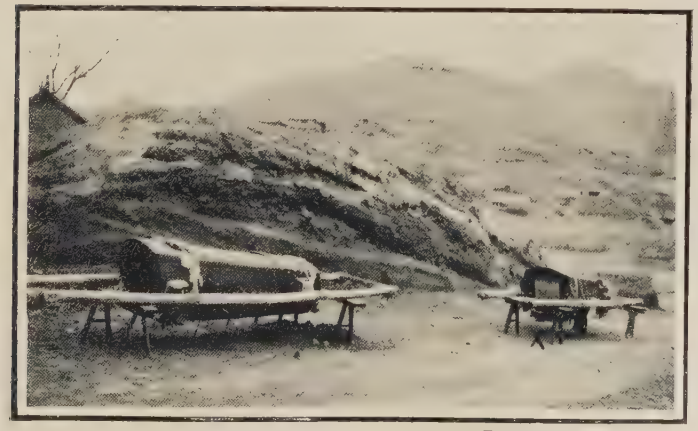

Photo by *F. A. Herald, Esq., M.Sc*

CHINESE COFFINS

Two coffins which have arrived at the gates of Yenanfu, *en route* from the scene of death to ancestral home. On the end of one coffin can be seen an official declaration. This will prevent soldiers on the road from opening it to see if it contains smuggled opium, a not unusual device.

know what was happening behind the scenes, and confidently predicted the action of the peers. Week by week, as I read the predictions, I smiled in a superior and satisfied style. I lived above such difference of opinion. I knew the end. It is a most enjoyable experience and is well worth the inclusion of a newspaper cutting in a letter.

Perhaps I cannot better illustrate the maximum contrast between the speed of letters and that of papers and parcels than by recording that I once received within a few days of one another a letter which had come in the record time of twenty-one *days* and a packet of newspapers which had taken over twenty-one *weeks*.

And then some fortunate missionaries have parcels. These travel considerably slower even than papers—being sent in carts, with longer intervals between consignments. Four months cannot be considered slow for these, and they often require much more. There is therefore no temptation whatever to defraud the post office by enclosing letters in parcels. A detective would never trace the guilty person; there would be such a complete absence of *motive* for the crime. The foregoing will suffice to show that the preacher and the postman have much to do with each other.

But it may be asked: At this advanced stage of the world's civilisation could not the postman undertake both duties? Ingenious mathematical calculations have sometimes been made to show that what the Church has not done in nineteen centuries might have been done in half-a-generation. I once heard it stated

that a message from the King of England could probably reach "every creature" in fifteen years, why should a message from the King of Kings need two thousand? But that is to confuse the issue. It is to fail to distinguish between things that differ—it is to mistake the mail for the missionary.

As a matter of fact, if it were merely a matter of getting a message through, it could now be done very quickly. China might be evangelised from the London offices of the missionary societies in a month or two, with no greater dislocation of affairs than an unusual run on twopence-halfpenny stamps. And indeed the Christian Literature Society does make great use of the post office. Why will not this simple and inexpensive method entirely suffice? Because, in spite of all they have in common, the postman is not the preacher. The message has to be incarnated as well as delivered —and more. "Without the shedding of blood there is no Gospel," neither is there any real preaching.

CHAPTER VI

EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

FELLOW-BELIEVERS in the great world-wide feminist movement have sometimes asked strange questions about the progress of that cause in China. I, of course, know nothing about Canton, that hot-bed of revolutionaries of all kinds, nor much of any of the ports. But ignorance of these is no hindrance to knowledge of China, for they are not typical. No lack of sympathy with the movement for the emancipation of women must be argued from the statement that it is more than amusing to be asked whether the women of China are likely soon to have the vote, although even in this connection one must not forget that for many recent years the whole of China was autocratically ruled by the iron will of one woman, the Empress Dowager, commonly known as the "Old Buddha." [1] But the custom of foot-binding is still all but universal in the great interior areas, and it is typical of the cramped, cabined and confined existence of most of China's women, especially her young women.

It may not be quite true—and I am anxious to avoid all exaggeration of statement—that girls are not wanted,

[1] See *China under the Empress Dowager, by* Bland and Backhouse.

but it is quite certain they are not so welcome as boys. When a child is born the question is asked: "Is it the Great happiness or the Small happiness?" Happiness, let it be admitted, in both cases, but in one case small.

When my own little girl was born, and the question was asked me, I answered, "Great happiness," which, while from my point of view was far less than the truth, had the effect of deceiving others.

When the girl is in her early teens she will in most cases be regarded commercially, and, without consulting her, her parents, through a middleman, will engage her to be married, most likely to someone of whom she has hitherto not even heard. The parents will receive a handsome sum for her. Sometimes for the price of his daughter a man will be able to buy land or a house, a cow, donkey or horse, or, if he is very fortunate, perhaps a mule. These are not vague and exceptional possibilities, but everyday occurrences in many parts of China, and especially here.

After the wedding she is not called "wife," but "daughter-in-law," and this title expresses the simple fact. The husband proceeds with his trade or profession, probably far away from home, if, or when, he is old enough to leave school, while his wife is transferred to his parents' house, to be the servant of his mother.

Experiences at this time of life may vary, but many, if not most, are extremely bitter. The young girl speedily loses the freshness of youth, and it is not until she is fairly advanced in years, with grown-up children of her own, that she receives any dignity or respect.

Then she becomes, with her husband, the object of filial piety. Till then, not only does she not dream of a voice in the administration of the affairs of the nation, but the leisure, pleasure and treasure so richly showered on the young women of Christian lands are alike unknown to her. She cannot read, and rigid custom forbids that she should go out of doors. Her whole outlook is thus confined to the four dull, dirty walls of the house of her parents-in-law; and her knowledge never extends beyond that of cooking, sweeping and sewing. Need it be wondered that her only recreation is idle gossip?

The foregoing is far from being an exaggerated statement of conditions that prevail over large areas of China, and more particularly in places such as this, far off the beaten track. No further evidence is needed to prove that the women of these parts are unemancipated. What of the emancipating process?

In Yenanfu, as probably in all parts of China, if not of the world, the liberating idea came from Christianity. It was first illustrated in 1903, when Mr Ch'ü, himself conscious of freedom from old-time fetters, sought to cure his wife's opium craving, and removed the bandage from his daughter's recently bound feet. Ardent supporters of the movement which forms the subject of this chapter will probably regard this as a very small beginning. But "who shall despise the day of small things"?

The process had proceeded one pace further when, three days after my wife's arrival in Yenanfu, she

commenced a service for women (for whom there was not then room in the small chapel), this time attended by four.

Then before many weeks there came to the small dispensary the woman already mentioned in our account of Dr Robertson's visit as the first woman convert to Christianity in North Shensi. She had suffered for many years from chronic dyspepsia. But by adopting some wise suggestions, and by following a course of treatment prescribed by my wife, she received considerable relief. She expressed her gratitude by coming regularly to all our services, at the cost of untold petty persecution. When Dr Robertson came he entirely cured her opium craving. And when we were needing a nurse for our little girl our thoughts quickly turned towards her, for she was very clean and exceptionally intelligent. It was only the hope of her monthly earnings that induced her elderly mother-in-law to consent to her coming, for although Mrs Li then had grandchildren of her own, she was still quite under the control of her mother-in-law.

It was not long after this that deep sorrow visited her. Her daughter became dangerously ill, and for many weeks she was almost heart-broken. As the long illness was drawing to its close, her son, living in a different part of the city, and enjoying good health, was suddenly taken ill and died. Thus within two hours she lost two children—one of a long, the other of a very brief, illness.

Her neighbours did not hesitate to say that this was

a judgment upon her for her association with foreigners. And immediately after this the revolution broke out, and the hooliganism that characterised it here. These were severe trials for her new faith, but it remained firm, and she stayed with us when robbery and violence seemed imminent.

Within a few hours of our arrival after furlough she walked into the house to resume her old duties. During our absence the mother-in-law had died, and her husband is permanently absent, though he is still eager for a share in her earnings. Thus no restraint is put upon her, and she is living a happy, healthy life. The very little leisure that our children, between whom and Mrs Li there is a perfect love match, allow her is spent in learning to read.

She is one of the best examples that four years' missionary work in Yenanfu can show of the emancipation of woman, the first-fruits (may we not hope?) of many others.

Another branch of the emancipating process was begun when, within a few months of our arrival in 1910, a small girls' school was opened. Nowhere in the whole area had there hitherto been such an institution, and it consequently had to encounter many pioneering difficulties. But ten girls came. Those with bound feet consented to have them unbound, and none of them afterwards have had them rebound, in spite of the temporary set-back that the Shensi revolution gave to the anti-foot-binding movement, for the hated Manchu women were identified by their natural-sized feet.

The girls' school continued until we were compelled to leave in 1911, and was the most striking sign in the whole of North Shensi that there was a movement abroad for the emancipation of women. Since then the school has considerably increased in size and influence.

The liberating propaganda is meanwhile spreading apace. In addition to visiting in the homes, Mrs Borst-Smith conducts each week classes for reading and knitting, as well as religious services. And the section of the chapel set apart for women is always well occupied.

Under the republic we shall expect this movement to accelerate its pace. Already a Government girls' school has been established in Yenanfu, and the official was telling me recently that he hopes to institute compulsory education for girls as well as boys. It was not Confucius, or Buddha or Laotse, excellent though their teachings are, who taught the Chinese State this. It is one of the ideas, innumerable and priceless, that is dawning on the Chinese mind through the teachings of Christianity.

The beginning has been made, but the end is not yet. And in this land of strange compromise it is natural to expect some amusing combination of the old and the new, the conservative and the progressive.

On the Yenanfu main street, just three doors from our own, and founded on its model, is the newly established official preaching hall, where the benefits of republicanism are periodically explained and the general

ignorance of the "stupid populace" is dissipated. The youth who was for a time in charge of this new establishment is a very typical example of "Young China." Once, after a long talk with him, he asked if I would be willing to take his photograph. His dress was such a splendid admixture of the Imperial and the Republican that I readily consented, saying that I had a plate in my camera at the time. I was somewhat surprised, however, at his hesitation, knowing that Young China is usually very eager to see itself as it supposes others see it. After continued reluctance he blushingly confessed that to-morrow would be a more convenient day, adding that he would like to be taken *with his wife*, his companion and equal! This seemed good; we were fellow-reformers, and so we made the appointment.

The next day he arrived shortly after the appointed time. He sat on, and we talked (have I not said that the missionary who does work among "the classes" must take joyfully the spoiling of his time and look to the late evenings for his chance of quiet?). After a long time I ventured to inquire about the lady. "She will come shortly," he reassured me; "but we must not be seen in the streets at the same time. China is very bad, and people would smile and life would become intolerable." After all, is it not for the complete emancipation of men that the world really waits?

CHAPTER VII

AN OUTING AND AN OUT-STATION

MOST missionaries have large parishes. The present Yenanfu diocese extends for six days' journey north and four days' south; to the Yellow River on the east and the borders of Kansuh and Mongolia on the west.

This means that our work cannot be entirely local, and that periodical tours form an important part of our programme. The natural result is a deeper impression at the central station, where institutions are established and more concentration is possible, and a more general result at the circumference.

I purpose here giving an account of a recent tour through the southern section of my diocese.

Methods of travel are primitive. Carts do not exist in the area, the mule-litter is cumbersome and expensive, sedan-chairs are too luxurious for ordinary use. A pack mule was therefore hired for a few items of necessary luggage, and a horse for the boy and myself to ride in turns. Walking is considerably the quickest method in the long run, and as my journey followed on a period of close and confined administrative work, I decided it was time for some good physical drill, so I let the boy have most of the turns with the horse and I myself

walked over one hundred and sixty miles of the one-hundred-and-eighty-mile journey, and usually arrived at the end of the stages considerably earlier on that account. As North Shensi is very mountainous (the city of Yenanfu is itself 3107 feet above sea-level), the tour was fairly strenuous, but the crisp, cold weather made it quite enjoyable.

The distance was considerably reduced on account of the rivers being sufficiently frozen for all the traffic to cross on the ice. Thus one was able to take a straight road instead of following the bends of the river. We sometimes met a train of twenty mules on the middle of a frozen river.

On the evening of the second day snow fell fairly fast, and we wondered whether it would be possible to travel on the next day. It was, however, only sufficient to make travelling rather more difficult. As we were the first people on the road, we were able to discern from the footprints on the fresh snow who made up the night-time population of these mountainous tracks. There were many more hares than ordinary day-time observation would lead one to think; wolves and deer we knew were numerous; large numbers of foxes had been abroad; and then in one place were the unmistakable footprints of a leopard.[1] Leopards are often poisoned in these parts and their skins brought for sale, but one gets rather a fresh idea of their nearness when

[1] Several of the American geologists who now reside in the neighbourhood have shot leopards. There was a good deal of competition as to who should get the first.

one sees their signatures so recently stamped on the snow.

In two of the towns in which we have evangelists I not only conducted services, but also visited the local official. The presence of ourselves or our representatives in any town increases the responsibility of the magistrate, for he is expected to protect the man and the premises against the ill-disposed. Thus mere courtesy, not to mention any higher impulse, demands a visit.

The official at Lo Chwan turned out to hail from the East Suburb of Sianfu, where the headquarters of our mission in Shensi is situated. He knew Mr Shorrock and Dr Young, as well as the Chinese teacher of the late Dr Robertson. Thus we immediately found much in common. He would have been removed earlier, but the local " gentry " and leaders had combined in a request to retain him longer.

At Fu Chow also the official was extremely friendly. In reply to our question as to whether he was a native of the province or not, as most Shensi officials were during the first two years of the republic, he answered in the negative. But our fears lest he or his family had not yet become acclimatised were set at rest by his reassuring statement that they had been here for five hundred years ! It obviously takes some time in China to become a native of any given province ; ten consecutive generations may live, move and have their entire being in a province and still be regarded as immigrants. This official was expecting shortly to go to Peking for examination with a view to a permanent appointment.

At Fu Chow a military captain with his troops is stationed. He had within recent months shared an inn for a few days with Rev. John Bell, whom he met on a journey, and he had as a result become well disposed to all missionaries and evangelists. Earlier on the day of my visit to him we had seen some small images of Buddha called "body-protecting Buddhas," such as some adherents of that faith carry on their person. In the course of conversation I asked him if he carried one. He immediately drew a German-made five-chamber revolver from his belt and said: "This is my body-protecting Buddha."

But much of this is apart from the purpose of our outing. What of the out-station? It will avoid repetition of many things that are similar if of the three visited we confine our remarks to one, the central of them—viz. Fu Chow.

Before coming to North Shensi I had often heard that at Fu Chow there were many families favourably inclined to Christianity. In the course of a preliminary tour early in 1910 I secured rented premises and appointed an evangelist. The day preceding the revolution of 1911 I baptized three new Fu Chow candidates; these, with earlier baptisms and transfers, brought the membership to nine. During the furlough of the foreign missionary the evangelists went on with their work, and as a result a few more new members were accepted immediately on our return. But these did not by any means represent the number who had been influenced, and there was obvious need for more

commodious premises. Such happened to be in the market; but before approaching our provincial committee for permission to purchase these, I first inquired if the small local church would not exert its strength and have a worthy share. For these are days when we hear much of self-*control*. Should not self-*support* be concurrent with it, and should not the foundations be laid with this in view? After consultation the few members resolved to undertake two-sevenths of the whole, on condition that ample time was given to raise it. To undertake that thirty pounds, in addition to much extra expenditure, means a tremendous effort, but will they not be better for it?

The occasion of my visit was used for the entry and adoption of the new premises. Although Fu Chow is from one point of view on the circumference of our district, it is yet the centre of its own local circle, and people gathered from all directions. About eighty people came to the six special services we conducted there. The entertainment of so many means considerable expense as well as trouble, but no foreign money was used for this. A collection is always an integral part of our special gatherings, and on the subscription list before it was completed there were seventy-nine names. May one be forgiven for repeating that liberality is not a heathen virtue, therefore that subscription list is proof that in and around Fu Chow—an outstation occupied by an evangelist for the first time in 1910—there are eighty people who are seriously influenced by the Gospel.

Moreover, the Fu Chow members and learners are very desirous of having a church school. But that is an expensive ambition to cherish, for our mission rules are exacting on this point. If the pupils board at the school (as on account of their widely scattered homes they would be compelled to do), all the expense entailed, including a cook's salary, must be entirely provided for by themselves. In addition to this, they must purchase all books and provide one half of the teacher's salary ; all of which expense might be entirely saved if the children were sent to a heathen school.

The general progress at Fu Chow rendered the appointment of local officers necessary, and so three honorary stewards were elected from among their number to administer the affairs of Church and school.

I am deeply grateful that in less than four years, broken by a revolution and subsequent furlough, a community of about a hundred people has been gathered from in and around Fu Chow, strong enough to support its own school, intelligent enough to elect its own officers, and grateful enough to seek to repay some of the cost on its buildings. And I had then only visited Fu Chow seven times.

May this not throw some light on the relative place of the foreign missionary and the Chinese evangelist ? However capable an evangelist the former may be, he can only preach in one place at one time. He must surely tend more and more to become the teacher, inspirer and superintendent of others, through whom his influence may be multiplied manifold.

CHAPTER VIII

WHERE WAS WHITE WOLF?

MY colleague, Rev. John Shields, who had resided in Yenanfu for five months, had just recovered from a long and serious illness, and we had passed through one of those trying periods which are not described in the printed reports of the society, or on the public platform, but which are more exhausting than many months of regular work, and cost much of one's heart blood. One has often known consecutive months when, during periods of epidemic, the missionary has had to go about his work with the handicap of serious sickness in his family, or that of his colleagues, and consequent sorrow, with no medical help within reach. But, happily, after a time Mr Shields' temperature became normal, and he was able to start the ten days' long journey required to obtain medical advice in Sianfu.

As I was accompanying him with his wife and child a little on their journey, I said: "Do you know, the last people I accompanied out of this South Gate were Dr and Mrs Young with little Russell, and, as you remember, they had not gone many days before they were held up by the outbreak of the revolution.[1] Happily

[1] *Caught in the Chinese Revolution.*

you won't have that kind of experience." Had there been the faintest suggestion of trouble one would not have spoken thus. Although dignity had never been fully restored to the Shensi Government after the revolution, there had been steady improvement, and somehow or other further outbreaks had not entered into our calculations.

But Mr and Mrs Shields had been gone just four days when I received the first of a series of letters from Rev. A. G. Shorrock, B.A., senior Baptist missionary in Shensi, dated 24th March 1914, saying: "Our attention is just now taken up with White Wolf. He or his troops are in Shang Chou, only four days south, and our Shensi troops can't stop him. How soon he will be here we cannot say. General Chao Chou is coming from the east, but he may be too late. I would strongly advise the Shields not to travel this way until you hear from us that the road is clear."

A slightly later letter (31st March) said: "The troops and 'tu fei' [literally, "scum of the earth," the usual Chinese expression for robbers] that looted Ching Tzu Kwan came on to Shang Chou, and after easily getting into the town and possessing it, came farther north and menaced Sianfu. There was a good deal of panic here for a day or two. The soldiers would not face the rebels and refused to follow the Tutuh [military governor] into the hills. Now that the enemy has turned tail the troops are, I believe, following them! The authorities are afraid of the soldiers now."

The next letter, dated 7th April, said: "We have had

an anxious time lately. All the missionaries near have been called into the city. But things are better owing to the proximity of General Chao Chou. We are living again in the days of the revolution and again waiting for General Chao Chou and his men. He will be here in two days. His troops seem the only men who can face White Wolf's rebels. If these soldiers should come to Yenanfu the best plan will be to open the gates and treat them well. One or two towns have escaped pillage and massacre in this way."

12th April. "We have had more anxious days and now notice has come from the Foreign Office urging the coming to Sianfu of the friends in San Yuan. White Wolf has been moving about with wonderful energy and abominable cruelty. Huhsien, Choutsi, Mihsien and Chien Chou have all been sacked and in the two former places hundreds of harmless folk killed.

"In addition, a *widespread* rising of the Ko Lao Hwei [Elder Brother Society] has been threatened and the country is greatly disturbed. Spies are everywhere, and proclamations of the White Wolf posted even near the Nan Yuan Meu [the Yamen of the governor of the province, latterly occupied by General Chang Yün Shan]. The Foreign Office are evidently afraid of two things—either that the White Wolf will make for the north, or that a Ko Lao Hwei rising will take place there. *They advise your moving to Shansi—pro tem.* White Wolf's movements are so rapid that we could not get a messenger up to warn you in time if he started north. But I understand the Foreign Office to *strongly*

advise and not exactly to order you. I will inquire to-morrow what the Foreign Office base their fears on, and let you know. *Meanwhile, get ready for emergencies.* Put your silver quietly away: bury it if you can. Inquire about local conditions before you move. The perils of the road are great at such a time as this. We pray for you and feel for you keenly in such a lonely position. New circumstances are rising every day that may call for new considerations and action. I will write you again within two days."

17th April. "I am very pleased to send you much better news. Our troubles bid fair to be soon over, at least in their acute form. General Chao Chou has come, and gone to the supposed rendezvous of the White's Wolf's followers. General Chao Chou's troops are well armed, but will they stand? I feel sure that the greater part of them will, as they have already chased the elusive White Wolf in Honan.

"My only fear is that the northern [Yenanfu] route may be the only one open to him. If he does come your way, you had better get away from the city and hide with your Christians until the trouble is past. Unless the city is well guarded it is much better to treat the enemy well than ill. Some places were saved from pillage and the womenfolk from molestation by an offer of food or money or shelter, and by opening the gates wide as the rebels came along. Huhsien, Choutsi and Chien Chou have all suffered terribly because of their resistance. In each of these places there were probably 1000 killed and wounded after the enemy entered, to

say nothing of dreadful, nameless outrages. But you will be guided aright in arranging what to do. I do not think the rebels will proceed northward. They may get hemmed in too tightly. But it is well to be prepared. We think of you often and trust you may be kept in peace of mind as well as in continued safety."

21st April. "The news is still good and it seems as if the White Wolf is not going to pay you a visit after all. We do not hear of his veering northwards. He may be surrounded, but he is so slippery that I do not believe he will be caught. The movements of other troops are slow, and necessarily so, because *they have to buy* or carry things, whereas *White Wolf takes* what he wants as he goes along.

"I am very thankful for your sake that there does not seem to be any need for you to move. The roads are difficult, and I do not have the slightest confidence in the soldiers provided for escorts."

I have given these extracts from the letters of Mr Shorrock in their sequence, unbroken by explanations, as they give an outline of the outstanding facts and indicate the changing prospects, and so form a suitable text for this chapter. Much can be read between the lines of these reserved and sober statements, and still more between the dates of the various letters. But they indicate the course of events from the first signs that Shensi was once again to be the scene of turmoil and bloodshed until the arrival in Shensi of adequate forces from Peking to chase the rebels farther west.

Between the receipt of these letters the outlook in Yenanfu was constantly changing.

Regarding the capital, Sianfu, my friend Rev. J. C. Keyte, M.A., also wrote: "No troops in Sianfu would stand up to these White Wolf lot, *if once the latter got inside.*" But there was always that pleasing condition regarding Sianfu—*if once the latter got inside.* For the walls of Sianfu are stronger and more imposing than those even of Peking; and with skill and courage within there could be no successful attack from without, except by tremendous forces.

But what of the rest of the province, where not even a pretence of resistance could be offered? What of Yenanfu, which lay on one of the two main routes of escape, should the expected attack on Sianfu be unsuccessful?

"Hang on to your silver; I don't know when we can get more up to you," writes Mr Keyte, the Chancellor of the Shensi Baptist Exchequer, recalling the bankruptcy which added unspeakably to our dangers in 1911.

Now what did actually happen in Yenanfu? Looking back to the time now, one has to admit that simply nothing of any importance occurred. With gratitude one has to record that the fears of plunder and outrage were not realised.

Yenanfu was filled with fears of what *might* happen. The air was full of rumours.

No one who has not lived in China can have any idea as to what a Chinese "flying rumour" is. For speed

it can compete with the telegraph. The splendidly accelerated post, already referred to, brought us letters in less than a quarter of the time formerly required; but rumour raced letters. Perhaps in the case of carefully designed rebellions spies spread the reports even before the events occur—and leave the events to live up to the reports. And this suggests another feature of the rumour: it does not always bear a very close resemblance to the fact. One concludes it must always have at least a starting-point and sometimes even a foundation in fact. For instance, some months ago, in view of an itinerating tour, I purposed purchasing a pony, since it is sometimes almost as cheap to buy as to hire. I possess none of the qualities of the jockey, so I sought an animal that would be sympathetic to my limitations. Such could sometimes be purchased in Yenanfu for less than three pounds. In a very short time it was known confidently that "the missionary is raising a regiment of cavalry." This may serve to show the distant relationships between rumour and reality. When the actual raw material of crude facts about the White Wolf's depredations were as serious as those soberly related above, readers will readily believe the rumours were very exciting. Everyone regards it as his sacred duty to add to rumour. Like the snowball, the further it goes the bigger it grows. It is enriched every time it is told. Fears are retold as facts. Every sinister suggestion that occurs to the panic-stricken mind is pressed into the service of rumour, and retold as a veritable reality.

It is in view of this that at the commencement of trouble one of the first proclamations a magistrate issues is "to prohibit idle gossip." In the towns not far from Sianfu the sufficiently tragic fact was that hundreds of harmless people were killed. As recounted in Yenanfu it was "not a chicken even has been spared." Rumour can become very dangerous. Although greatly removed from original truth, it yet has a way of *creating reality*. Elsewhere an outrage is said to have happened (even if it did not), and therefore it may happen here. It is an indication of the deep sanity of the Chinese character that it commences its defence by the edict "Stop Gossip."

There were therefore a few weeks during which anything might have happened when the least provocation could easily produce grave results. For a few days a small detachment of soldiers under a lieutenant were staying in the city. Soldiers were becoming increasingly arrogant. One afternoon a coarse, rough soldier wandered into our premises demanding access to the girls' school. The man at the gate, being tactful as well as firm, managed to get him away without a disturbance. But the following day he went to the Roman Catholic headquarters. The gate-keeper there prevented his entrance, and a fight between the two men immediately followed. The soldier, not being satisfied, went back to the inn for his gun, and returned, menacing the Roman Catholic staff. Hundreds of people gathered and a riot seemed likely. The soldier was happily carried off by other soldiers. But it was an

unfortunate time for such a display; and it was a mark of the prevailing laxity of discipline, through fear, on the part of officers, that the episode was allowed to pass with the soldier unpunished. In other times and circumstances a soldier would have been beheaded on the spot for less.

During these disturbed times one was always grateful for the friendliness existing between ourselves and the people generally. A few weeks before the news of trouble reached us the official and local gentry approached me with the request that I should teach English in the Government school. English was on their Government curriculum and they had no means of securing a professor. And moreover some of them seemed aware that the expensive professor of English employed at Yenanfu before the revolution had not been able to enter into even the simplest conversation with the English missionary. In any case, owing to China's financial straits, funds were not now available as they were then. I hesitated, for it was outside my proper work. But I recalled how greatly we foreign residents increase the burden of responsibility borne by officials. And I thought: "One never knows when we may next require their help; it seems mean to deny them what is at once so simple for us and so valuable for them." The half-an-hour which I promised on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays pleased them much without injuring me, and they readily understood that I could not accept the arrangement as binding when it clashed with any of my own proper duties. It seemed

strange that within a fortnight of the added tie between ourselves and the community the panic began, and one was grateful for the enhanced friendliness. The arrangement is a decided help to us in many ways. Not only do some of the Government scholars sometimes come to our services now, but I gain an added influence in the city.

One amusing fact which has become evident during this time of unrest is that among peace-spreading influences a camera has an important place. If there is any section of the community whose good will you are particularly anxious to secure, take their photo.

The vigilance consequent on the first batch of rumours brought our local police force into unwonted prominence; and its various members felt that their emergence into importance could not be better marked than by having their photo taken. They were delighted at my willingness to make the attempt. Such duties as guarding the four city gates and walls are important, in a way, at such times, but of course cannot be compared in urgency to that of making a complete group. Their uniform cannot be regarded as having a finished appearance, yet they wish to look their best, and so it occurs to some of them that to borrow the peaked caps formerly worn by the boys of the Government school will give them the desired official appearance. "But what of our queues," asks one. "These modern official hats with old-time queues will surely be an anomaly; let us do the thing properly." The idea was infectious, and what the Red Revolution and two and

a half years of Republicanism with repeated queue-cutting crusades, to say nothing of edicts, had failed to do in North Shensi, the prospect of a photo did.

But after all complete consistency is probably rarer than we sometimes suppose. And I preserved my little joke till all was safely over. "May I see the design on the front of your excellent official hat?" I asked. Several proudly consented. It was, as I remembered, a dragon! They were the hats belonging to the drill uniforms introduced early in 1911 *before* the revolution. And it was for a hat issued during the Manchu dynasty that they had removed their Manchu queues! But what did it matter? They merely wished to look smart. And for the rest, their business as policemen was not concerned very much with Republicanism or Imperialism, or any other "ism." They existed to protect their own and their neighbours' houses from outrage. For what are politics when persons and property are concerned? Meanwhile the larger subject of peace propagated by photography must await adequate treatment by an expert.

It will be easily understandable that people became terror-stricken. Yet it should be stated that the panic never even approximated the fierceness of that of 1911. Mr and Mrs Shields reached Sianfu without undue delay; postal communication was unbroken. But the great modifying local fact was the absence of military from Yenanfu, except for an occasional small company staying a few days in passing. It was a striking coincidence that the soldiers previously stationed in

Yenanfu had been recalled and had actually left a few days before the first reports of trouble. Had there been no soldiers in 1911 the dangers would have been unspeakably less. They can never be trusted. Disaffectation is quite the normal thing. The Westerner thinks of soldiers and robbers as exact contrasts, whereas in China they are practically synonymous terms. Indeed for months one has met soldiers who made no attempt to hide their sympathy with White Wolf.

The Yenanfu protectors having gone, the people set about protecting themselves—and with some confidence, for they had the memory of one victory to cheer them. If the White Wolf did not come, the danger was limited to Elder Brethren. But these latter had had a lesson here. As has been recorded in our chapter, "The Reign of Terror," when the last limit of endurance had been reached, the Yenanfu people, driven to desperation, and determined to make one last attempt to protect their homes, had risen in a body and killed their oppressors.

Still there remained terror enough, and one could not disguise the fact that Yenanfu lay on one of the two main routes open to White Wolf.

My wife and I could not do other than give to the "strong advice" of the Foreign Office careful consideration. But within less than a day, and some considerable time before permission to stay on reached us, we decided that we would not leave.

The Foreign Office could have no just cause to complain of our declining their advice, for it had been

unaccompanied by any help toward carrying it out. Between us and Taiyuanfu lay the fifteen days' difficult and dangerous travel described in "The Return Journey." For twelve days of this, that is as far as Fenchoufu, in the event of local risings there would be no protection whatever from brigands. Surely we were safer inside the four walls of our own city, where we and our work were well known. There was thus no special bravery in our staying instead of going.

But there were two considerations which made our decision final for us. One reason was because to leave would have caused panic all over the neighbourhood. The voluntary residence of a foreigner, when escape is possible, is a kind of vote of confidence in the local government's power of protection. This was expressed when, some time before our recent furlough expired, tradespeople and others in commenting on the peace of the district frequently said: "All we need now is for the missionary to return." Had we left when "advised" the worst fears would be felt to be confirmed, and the result would have been demoralising on the neighbourhood.

The other deciding consideration was because a united meeting of the Christians of the whole district had been arranged, and we felt ourselves absolutely committed to see it through. Invitations for these gatherings had been sent to all out-stations, including one eight days' journey north of Yenanfu. We knew that whereas to leave just before the date and so abandon the meetings would do damage to the peace

of the people, to hold them according to arrangement would do much good.

The outer panic afforded a striking test for the candidates for baptism. I have always been averse to credal tests for membership. To answer some questions would require a metaphysical knowledge which not one in a thousand of those who ask, or are asked, can possibly possess. Who can explain the Trinity, or fathom the Atonement, or fully understand the Incarnation? But the presence of the White Wolf made one very vital test possible. Everyone knew that the movement might at any time take a distinctly anti-foreign and anti-Christian turn, and that newly baptized Christians would be marked persons. And so the test questions were of this type: Have you counted the cost? Are you prepared to take up the cross? Supposing prison and death were the consequences, would you take this step? On these conditions we accepted twenty-six (four having taken a journey requiring eight days each way to be present), making, with those mentioned in the chapter, "Results of the Interregnum," thirty-eight in the first six months of our second period. The voluntary contributions reached nine pounds.

And by the time the meetings were over a letter came saying we might stay on.

Since then peace has been practically unbroken. For a time freight from Taiyuanfu was held up, no passports for travellers or luggage being given, as in some places it was supposed that the White Wolf had

actually captured Yenanfu. But in a few months all was quiet again, and it would even seem that a period of prosperity is before North Shensi. But that is the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

PROSPECTS OF MATERIAL PROSPERITY

SHENSI, though rich in historical association, is one of the most backward and poverty-stricken of all the provinces of China; and *North* Shensi is by far the poorest part even of this province; and the town of Yenchang, fifty miles east of Yenanfu, was one of the most forsaken and destitute even of North Shensi. Nothing more hopeless could well be imagined.

If there was any possibility of prosperity for Yenchang, the secret had indeed been well kept. But, like other secrets, it leaked out at last, for an oil-seep was detected. This discovery, in the course of time, led to the employment of Japanese engineers, and a well was bored. The wells were worked indifferently for several years, and the oil was carried on mule-back to Sianfu, at a cost of about one penny per pound for freight. Very little, if any, profit resulted, the proceeds being largely swallowed up in working expenses.

One proof that Yenchang had not attracted wide attention is that until 1911, in spite of the fact that the five-hundred-mile mail route from Sianfu to Yulinfu passed within a short distance, it had no post office.

Moved by the selfish motive of receiving our own mail more frequently and quickly, I pointed out to the then superintendent of the Chinese Imperial Post for Shen-kan (*i.e.* Shensi and Kansuh) the fact that to include Yenchang and some other towns would only involve a slight detour. The result was that the carriers were increased from four to eight, and branch offices were opened at Yenchang and the other neighbouring towns suggested. But even now the full benefits of the accelerated services elsewhere recorded do not reach Yenchang. The mail is brought by the express service to Yenanfu, and afterwards dispatched by a local and slower service.

The revolution in North Shensi brought activities to a complete standstill. There were no Japanese at Yenchang then, and the Chinese staff escaped. After the establishment of something like order the wells were again worked, but by an inferior staff, and with a consequently decreased output. One of the greatest problems encountered was the necessity, owing to an imperfect mechanical arrangement, of pumping water for three days to one day of oil. At the end of 1913 the monthly output was :

From the large well—10 tons
From the small well—3½ tons.

And this was disposed of as follows :—7 tons refined oil, 6 tons crude and 13 cwt. candles. These latter are a passable approximation to candles used in England, but they are very greasy and inclined to excessive

DUMPING FOUNDATIONS FOR BUILDINGS

The heavy pounding instrumen is worked by a gang of men varying in number from four to ten. By tauntening ropes passed through the top they raise this weight, and on the rope being loosened the weight falls with full force.

weeping. Other wells were being drilled, but no more oil was discovered.

Till a few months ago the discovery of oil had not brought great prosperity to Yenchang. Early in 1914 I decided to open an out-station there, and sent two evangelists to inquire about suitable premises. They returned, having found just what was desired for a preaching hall: a fair-sized shop-front on the best part of the main street, where the crowd would be biggest on market days. There was also a courtyard and several other rooms at the back. If rents are the key to the prosperity of a place, judge of the wealth of Yenchang in the year 1914 by this: the rental asked was one pound per annum, or fivepence per week.

It has always been the practice in the Yenanfu mission work to adapt Chinese buildings with the minimum of structural alteration; thus to transform a Yenchang shop into a preaching hall simply required new paper for the ceilings and windows, fresh whitewash on the walls and a little painting. But neither the mechanics nor the materials for these simple requirements could be found in Yenchang. Yenanfu must supply them all. Oil-wells notwithstanding, Yenchang seemed stubbornly to refuse to wake up, and to be doggedly determined to do nothing to disturb the general impression that the glory of North Shensi had departed.

The general attitude might be expressed in the sceptical question: "Can any good thing come out of North Shensi?"

Rebels it had produced, some of them strong enough

to defy the Empire. A few of the predecessors of the White Wolf, traceable in China's long story, have hailed from here. But what of "any *good* thing," beneficial, constructive, positive? Did the oil-seep seen some years ago bring no hope after all? It was a matter of time.

In the early days of the Chinese republic, among many dangers, two stood out with marked prominence: disintegration and destitution. There was for a time little central authority, and each province prepared to look after itself.

The first thing to look for was funds. The new Shensi rulers turned their hopes toward the north, and thought that Yenchang might save the provincial situation. And so preliminary inquiries were made as to the possibility of a foreign loan (for Shensi) on the security of the oil-wells.

But disintegration was to be resisted, the wealth of any one part must be at the disposal of the whole. It belonged to the nation, not the province, and so negotiations of a larger kind were started. The Central Peking Government itself directed its hopes of solvency towards Yenchang. North Shensi had once destroyed the Empire; could it not now save the republic?

The terms of the agreement are extremely interesting, probably unique. The high contracting parties were not nation with nation, nor merchant with merchant; but nation with merchant. The one is the Republican Government of China, the other a large American company.

Perhaps a few reflections on this strange relationship may be permitted by one who in the nature of the case knows very little about such matters. To start with, the terms are commercial, not political, and therefore involve no menace to the integrity of China. The distinction between politics and commerce is not always, or often, a real one in China, for merchants often greatly influence the action of their governments, as the opium traffic has proved. Further, few governments are really free to act individually, being fettered by treaties with others. The advantages of a transaction with an American company are therefore greater than with any other, for America is not bound by other governments, nor does she desire territory in China. It would be very different with a Russian or Japanese company.

The American company has obtained the right to exploit the oil-fields of Shensi, and is providing the funds for the preliminary outlay, while both the partners—the Chinese Government and the American company—share in the wealth that is meanwhile hidden in the earth and therefore helping no one. The arrangement has this healthy feature. China is looking within for her help and yet is availing herself of such friendly assistance as does not involve humiliating political conditions.

We may now conclude that it was only a superficial view that regarded North Shensi as destitute and poor. It is probable that vast wealth has been there all the time, enough not only to help the one province of Shensi, but to make some contribution to all the provinces. It merely awaited finding. China is not bankrupt, she

has endless resources, and the only help she needs is in tapping them. Which things are probably a parable.

Turning to another aspect of this new development, it is obvious that the coming into the neighbourhood of a number of other "foreigners" was bound to give pause to the foreign missionary. What would they be like? Would they represent the best elements of our Christian civilisation? Would they have any sympathy with the missionary enterprise? Would there be happy intercourse, or a crop of new problems? One of the principal objects in the formation of the *Anglo*-Chinese Friendship Bureau was to help to secure for posts in China only men of high principle. What would the Americans be like? It was therefore a pleasure to discover that one member of the original party was a son-in-law of Rev. Arthur Sowerby,[1] and brother-in-law of A. de Carl Sowerby, who has been referred to already.[2] This was as it should be. It would surely be contrary to "the Eternal fitness of things" for there to be any exploring in North Shensi without some member of the Sowerby family sharing in it.

The American geologists arrived at Yenchang from different directions and proceeded to make wide prospecting tours. We greatly enjoyed their visits when they passed through Yenanfu, and were glad that men of so fine a type had come to North Shensi.

In October, 1914, the first set of heavy machinery, requiring several hundreds of carts to transport, and

[1] Private tutor to the sons of President Yuan Shih K'ai.
[2] *Through Shenkan*, by Clark and Sowerby.

accompanied by sixteen American engineers, arrived in Yenchang for the drilling of wells. Three months later a similar set was dispatched to Chung Pu, not very far from the tomb of the ancient Emperor Hwang Ti, whose throne was established in Shensi over four thousand years ago.

A third set was erected three miles east of the city of Yenanfu, which is the geographical centre of the present area of exploration.

Meanwhile geologists and topographists are carrying out a minute examination of the rocks, and selecting suitable sites for further boring operations.

As for the results, these cannot be foreseen, but can only be known when actually achieved. The rocks are known to be of an oil-bearing character, and the present vast expenditure of capital has as its object the tracing of the oil to its source.

If the efforts of the American company are successful, telegraph lines will almost certainly be laid, and probably a road for automobile traffic built, and a great opening of the whole area to all kinds of enterprise will doubtless take place.

From the first we had frequent and enjoyable intercourse with the American explorers, and it has been a pleasure to occasionally place our knowledge of the locality and the language at their disposal.

Sometimes this cordiality has resulted, not only in mutual help, but also in advantage to the neighbourhood generally. It has already been stated in an earlier chapter that the chief geologist was in search of premises

sufficiently commodious to permit of periodical conferences with his colleagues, and to serve as general headquarters. At that time, on account of the transfer of the local Government offices from the County Court to the Prefectural Yamen, the former building was quickly deteriorating. As it was not the special duty of anyone to preserve the fabric, not only were some parts falling down, but tiles and bricks were often stolen at night-time.

Then when a few regiments of soldiers were passing through the city they would occupy the premises for a few days, and burn some of the expensive woodwork and all of the doors and windows as firewood, and in other ways hasten the destruction of the buildings.

It occurred to me that if negotiations could be carried out that would secure the County Court for the geologists, none would lose, and at least four advantages would accrue:

1. No building in Yenanfu could be so suitable for the Americans.

2. The preservation and transformation of the premises would be a definite enrichment of the city, and therefore a public benefaction. And if the question be asked, "What have Yamen buildings to do with missionaries," the reply is: "We claim the whole of life as within our sphere, and always rejoice to see chaos give place to order, if only in a building."

3. I was able to secure for the best of local workmen the contract for renovation, at slightly more than the

usual price, and so help local mechanics to meet the greatly increased cost of living.

4. For the hour or so of my time devoted to these transactions I have been paid a hundredfold in friendship and appreciation. And the lamps and pews and other furniture of the new chapel, the building of which we record later, supply tangible expression of these.

CHAPTER X

MARAUDERS AND MUTINEERS

SOME account has already been given of how Yenanfu fared during the revolution which turned the oldest of empires into the youngest of republics, and also the effect on the neighbourhood of the depredations of the famous brigand, White Wolf. But apart from these widespread and well-known movements there have frequently been periods of plundering of a more ordinary and common kind. And our story would be incomplete without a record of one of those.

Certain parts of North Shensi are well known to be the haunts of robbers. But it is usual for people to console themselves with the reflection: "They will not dare to come near the cities, or on to the main roads." But during the autumn and winter of 1915 their courage increased and their depredations assumed menacing proportions.

Although the newspapers were giving much attention to the monarchial movement at the time, these seemed to be robbers pure and simple—not reformers! So far as we could gather, they had not met together, like the "chosen people" of old, and "demanded a king"; nor had they expressed any views concerning the superiority of Republicanism. Their attitude from a

spectacular point of view was extremely disappointing. One heard of no polite euphemisms; they simply did not claim to be either politicians or patriots. It is more than likely that they had hardly heard of the monarchial movement then proceeding. In any case it left them unmoved, for they were equally opposed to all forms of government. They were like the Irishman who on reaching his new country and receiving an affirmative reply to his question, "Is there a government here?" retorted, "Well, I'm agin it."

The only watchword they proclaimed was entirely unpolitical and extremely unpolite—viz. Revenge. This motto gives a fairly accurate description of the movement, and it prevented it from becoming quite as indiscriminate as it might appear to a superficial observer.

On 13th October 1915 they sent a message to the people of Tao Tsao Pu, a small market town forty miles south of Yenanfu, stating that they would be coming on the following midnight. They added that inhabitants need have no fear, as the purpose of the visit was to take revenge on one person only. A month previously a Tao Tsao Pu youth of about twenty-two had given information which led to an attack on the robbers by the militia of Fu Chow, and provided they could capture the youth, they were prepared to leave all the other inhabitants unmolested.

They reached Tao Tsao Pu at their scheduled time, caught and killed the said youth, and departed without doing further damage.

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By daybreak the brigand band, now two hundred strong, reached Fu Chow.

Fu Chow is a town of comparative importance. Until 1912 it held sub-prefectural rank and governed five counties. Here also the robbers had revenge to take, this time on the militia and police who previously had acted on information given by the ill-fated youth.

It so happened, by coincidence, that a military officer with a small company of soldiers *en route* from North Shensi to Sianfu was staying the night in Fu Chow. For a time these co-operated with the police and militia for the protection of the city. But when it became obvious that the brigands were getting the upper hand, and had already commenced pouring in over the hill on which the western city wall is built, the soldiers opened peace negotiations as follows :—

Officer. "What is the purpose of this attack?"

Robbers. "Revenge."

Officer. "In that case it has nothing to do with us, who are mere passers-by."

Robbers. "Precisely."

Officer. "Then if you will agree to permit me, my men and my mules to pass on unmolested, I will consent to desist from attacking you and will leave you to take your revenge."

Robbers. "Agreed."

And so a policy of "benevolent neutrality" was arrived at between soldiers and spoilers—not for the first time in China's history!

The soldiers having taken their leave, the road was clear for the robbers.

The much-coveted position of a magistracy has its drawbacks, and the official of Fu Chow made a rapid, if somewhat undignified, exit from the "Yamen." In his haste he seems to have put on the wrong pair of shoes, or else he had no time to put them on securely. In any case he had not gone far when one fell off, and his attendant called after him: "Lao Yie, your shoe has fallen off." "Whatever you do, don't use that title," the official nervously exclaimed, for the title of respect and honour was only an embarrassment for the time being.

It is said that the official was somewhat of a "dandy" in times of peace, and that his wardrobe was well stocked with silks and satins. The result was that some of the leading looters who entered the city bare-chested left it dressed in the most approved style. The "Yamen" was completely looted, all the emoluments of office were stolen, and when the magistrate returned a few days later there was not even bed or bedding or any kind of furniture left. The leading shops were also robbed.

It is never possible to determine definitely whether the result of these attacks will be the increase or decrease of brigandage, for there are two alternatives. It is not unlikely that some of the robbers, possessed for the first time in their life of a silk waistcoat and a few ounces of silver, perhaps (climax of wealth) even of opium, may prefer to retire into the peace of private

life. Yet it is still more probable that the few secessions will be more than made up for by large accessions. And in this instance this was rendered still more likely by the fact that reports said they not only liberated all the inmates of the prison, but also secured the Fu Chow supply of arms and ammunition. This indeed illustrates the principle: "Each victory will help you some *other* to win."

Reports vary as to the number of people killed in Fu Chow, but there were probably twelve. The assailants failed, however, in securing the chief of the police, and they since threatened that unless he is given up to them they will renew their attack on the city.

The foregoing is sufficient to prove that riches, even more than revenge, is the real object of the robbers.

Some days before their attack on Fu Chow the brigands visited the town of Tientou, near one of the camps of the Standard Oil Company, and killed twenty-six people and wounded very many more. Within ten days they returned to that region, resuming their programme of plunder and murder.

It was noteworthy that nothing was heard about anti-foreignism in connection with the movement. It is pleasing to record that the character and conduct of the American community has been such as to commend them to all classes of the population. Not only have they greatly increased the finance of the district, but they have been conciliatory and generous. Their exchequer, it is true, might tempt a band of brigands, but their reputation as crack shots is also well known,

and reasonable robbers would think twice before running the risks.

The *Roman Catholic Priests' Mission* has a station quite near the city of Fu Chow, but they were entirely unmolested. Indeed it was to their house that the magistrate went for safety and hiding for a day or two. It was not without irony that during the time that the official was hiding there a man came with a scratch on the ribs from a bullet and asked the priest if anything could be done for it. The priest gave him some ointment and sent him away happy In expressing his thanks, the man added that the priest would be immune from attack. The visitor was one of the robbers!

The *English Baptist Mission* has no foreigner resident in Fu Chow. But it has the out-station already described periodically visited from Yenanfu. The evangelist in charge was at Yenanfu at the time Fu Chow was attacked, but a Church member and the evangelist's son, a lad of twelve, were looking after the premises. Shots were fired at both the front and back doors, and the place was broken into. An accordion and the evangelist's clothes and possessions were secured, and preparations were being made to burn the building when some in the street spoke the magic word: "Church." The robbers desisted at once and speedily returned the stolen things.

The explanation of the attack is simple. The house had been under the *law* before it was secured for the *Gospel*. It had previously been the property and

residence of a former chief of police, and the robbers supposed that the present officer lived there. But as they had no grudge against the Gospel, they rapidly retreated.

All the towns in North Shensi joined in the urgent appeal for troops from Sianfu.

We did not then know whether soldiers would be sent to North Shensi, or whether, if they were, they would consent to suppress the robbers, for the relation of soldiers to brigands is puzzling, even to the most experienced. Are soldiers ex-brigands, or are brigands ex-soldiers, or can we dispense with the "ex" and declare that soldiers and brigands are one and the same people at one and the same time. Are they mutual friends or foes, or have they anything at all to do with one another? If one were to judge from particular instances only, it would be quite true to reply that the answer to all the questions is in both the negative and positive. The subject illustrates the danger of general statements. Perhaps the safest statement is: "There are soldiers and soldiers."

In any case, within a fortnight the reasons for unrest underwent a complete change. At first the fear was of roving bands of ruffians who professed to be nothing but robbers, and there was the unusual spectacle of people pining for the presence of soldiers. As a matter of fact, North Shensi was not entirely without troops, for there were about fifty in Yenanfu and another two hundred and fifty widely scattered over the towns considerably farther north. These were all

of the type that enlisted in the early days of the Shensi revolution, but the only complaint about them was that they were considered far too few to resist robbers.

The case could be stated briefly thus : On the debit side was the possibility of attack by large and desperate bands of ruffians, while on the credit side could be reckoned the imperfectly armed militia and police, supported by a few (all too few) soldiers.

It was not many days, however, before circumstances changed, and it was found that the soldiers must be transferred to the debit side of the account, and that the fewer they were the better.

About midday of Friday, 29th October, it became known in Yenanfu that a company of about one hundred of these soldiers, stationed with their colonel six days' journey north-west, had mutinied and looted the town. It was said that they were on their way southwards with the intention of linking up with the robbers. For some hours these rumours were treated as news from afar with no immediate relevance for ourselves. The subject was freely discussed during the afternoon, that was all—until just after dark. Then things changed. At half-past six the outlook was peaceful, by seven all was panic. In the interval it leaked out that the fifty soldiers in Yenanfu had decided, in accordance with a secret plan, to follow the example of their colleagues farther north, and mutiny that night.

The magistrate speedily summoned the heads of the police, the militia and the merchants' guild. What

arms and ammunition the city possessed were distributed so that each compound had a rifle or two, and the whole population kept vigil. The staff of the National Oil Bureau took turns in keeping watch for a few nights, merchants improved the time by hiding their silver and opium, while women secreted away their bracelets and rings. For three nights the main street was thronged with excited crowds. The soldiers made no secret of their hostility to the police and militia, but they did not proceed further than a battle of words. Why? Although the natives of Yenanfu had not the courage to disarm and dispel the disturbers of the peace, neither had they the monopoly of cowardice. Then with the passage of time it must have become evident that valuables of all kinds would be undiscoverable. And so passed two or three days of acute panic. Several weeks earlier many requests had been sent to Sianfu for reliable troops, and they must have been well on their way by the time of the mutiny, for in less than four days from the first fright that overtook Yenanfu four hundred Government troops marched into the city. Then all was peaceful again —for a time.

Hardly a week had passed, however, before North Shensi passed through a third phase, and one which justified a third opinion on the relation between the military and the marauders. During the first episode they were appealed for as *friends*; in the second they were feared as *foes*; in the third they appear as *neutral*, for on this occasion it mattered very little whether they

were soldiers in the neighbourhood or not. This attack thus differed from the preceding two. Unlike the first, there were soldiers in the neighbourhood. Unlike the second, the soldiers were not the cause of the trouble. In this last instance they were near, but negligible.

The small town of Chao Tao Yuen is seven miles south-east of Fu Chow. Unlike the latter, it is on the main highroad between Sianfu and Yenanfu, and it is one of the stopping stages. From the point of view of travellers, it is more important to have reliable soldiers stationed there than in Fu Chow itself. Moreover, the annual market was proceeding during the early days of November.

On the afternoon of Saturday, 6th November, a procession of mules and donkeys *en route* from Sianfu and Yenchang reached Chao Tao Yuen. Among the party were a trusted servant of twenty years' standing of the Yenchang magistrate, returning after taking silver to Sianfu, a secretary of the Yenanfu Yamen, an ex-official's wife and family returning to Yenanfu, a horse-dealer homeward bound with the proceeds from the sale of a herd of horses. There were also several loads of freight for the foreign store in Yenanfu.

The packs had only just been unloaded, and preparations for feeding the animals had hardly been completed when thirty or forty robbers, armed with modern rifles, rushed into the inn yard, shouting: "Kill! Kill!" One of the muleteers told me later that he and his companions just dropped the basins from which

they were sipping water and, abandoning everything, ran for their lives. It seemed immaterial to the robbers whether they took life or not. To kill was obviously not their purpose, but to rob ; yet they did not hesitate to take life if by that means their object was more easily and speedily attained. The servant of the Yenchang official fired at them with a revolver, and the robbers quickly retaliated by shooting him dead.

It is said that the robbers, who are almost entirely illiterate, are in search of men of education and ability to supply their own lack of learning. Many people believe that one of the subsidiary objects of the attack on Fu Chow, three weeks earlier, was to capture the magistrate for this purpose. In any case the secretary of the Yenanfu Yamen was carried off by them, probably for clerical duties.

No other people were molested, but the brigands cut open the boxes belonging to the party and appropriated everything that was valuable and portable, in addition to the animals. The fifteen mules and two donkeys thus stolen represent almost the entire possession of several different Yenanfu families. The attack lasted about two or three hours.

One would have at least expected that after this event some military measures would have been taken. But that such was not the case is proved by the fact that a few days later a train of mules carrying kerosene from Yenchang southwards were stolen at the same place. This second attack on Chao Tao Yuen was by no means lacking in humour. For it has been pointed out that

amongst the spoil obtained a few days earlier were numbers of foreign lamps. But what is the use of lamps without oil? They were not prepared to follow the example of the five foolish virgins.

The possibility of their swiftly swooping on unprotected districts is increased with each additional success, as the brigand bands are by the possession of so many animals becoming rapidly converted from infantry to cavalry.

What of the soldiers? They were seven miles away!

But it must not be supposed that the owners of the mules and donkeys were resigned to their loss. China is the land of diplomacy, and so negotiations were soon started with a view to reclaiming the animals.

A week or so later I hired one of the muleteers who had been attacked on an itinerating tour, and on the road he was communicative. The owners had appointed representatives to get into touch with the thieves and bargain with them. The terms agreed to were that the fifteen mules and two donkeys would be returned on a payment of 300 taels (£40), about half the original cost. "But," I asked the youth, "how can they communicate with these daring outlaws?" "Never fear," he replied; "there are middlemen," which led me to reflect that if there had been a Chinese Sherlock Holmes available he might have been able to reach scientific proof as to the haunts of the bandits.

During the months under review not only were animals often taken as hostages, but people also, and

they were delivered up by means of the recognised registry offices, upon payment of the stipulated ransom.

The foregoing will show that the men and munitions of the marauders were rapidly increasing. But not only so : another result of their success was to attract other brigand bands from all directions, making certain parts of North Shensi a robbers' rendezvous.

In less than three weeks after the attack on Chao Tao Yuen a band of one hundred and fifty strong, the advance guard of a company numbering a thousand, approached the town of I Chun. The official escaped, but the Yamen was robbed here. The chief of the police, a secretary of the Yamen and one of the soldiers comprising the American geologists' bodyguard were killed. The people generally were promised freedom from harm on the condition that they produced all their possessions.

But the new feature in this attack was the narrow escape of Americans on Thanksgiving Day.

In a temple just outside the North Gate of I Chun a party of geologists were camped. Three of the men had left on the afternoon preceding the attack, so as to spend Thanksgiving Day at the drilling camp fifteen miles south, leaving only the chief geologist and his wife in the camp. By a rather strange coincidence they had been previously informed by the I Chun magistrate that he purposed testing some new rifles recently received from Sianfu, and therefore there would be no need for alarm if firing were heard. The programme, however,

was not carried out, and at night-time they remarked upon the fact. But before daybreak on the following morning (25th November) they were awakened by the firing of guns. It soon became evident that this was not the intended testing of rifles referred to, but an attack on the town.

The American lady and gentleman wisely decided to make good their escape, for their total escort consisted of four soldiers, who with servants were frantic to be off.

The bulk of their money was hurriedly hidden in an unused and dark part of the temple.

The sun had not risen and there was a heavy mist, but they managed to find their way on to a circuitous route which would eventually lead to the drilling camp. Before long they met a horse which they were able to hire for the lady of the party, and after about twelve or fourteen miles four donkeys. Their letter told us that when at last, after nine hours of travel, they reached the camp, they were ready for breakfast! For them it was a novel and memorable method of spending Thanksgiving Day.

It is simply impossible to tell whether their lives would have been endangered had they stayed, for there was distinctly no anti-foreignism. But they most certainly did the wisest possible thing in escaping. The robbers may have rules, but it is better not to run risks, for fear of exceptions.

The camp was hurriedly visited and 1000 taels (£100), six horses and foreign saddles, three watches and clothes belonging to the Chinese staff were stolen,

but the storeroom containing most of the surveying instruments was not disturbed.

Let us give the soldiers their due. It was the unexpected appearance of five hundred soldiers that put an end to the attack on I Chun. These soldiers stayed two or three days and then came on to Yenanfu, where their first duty was the disarming and disbanding of the whole company, a section of which had mutinied.

There was a somewhat amusing, though thoroughly characteristic, sequel to the attack on I Chun. Amongst the names of the newly established aristocracy appeared that of a North Shensi general who was made a Baron for meritorious services (obviously prospective!) in suppressing brigands. But there are two ways of suppressing brigands: one is to *exterminate* them, the other is to *enlist* them. The baron chose the latter method. The leader of the attack on I Chun had formerly held military rank under him. It is said that the baron, without bodyguard or attendant, went to the rebels' haunt and expostulated with their chief, urging him to abandon his outlawry and transfer his great abilities to the service of the State. The robber stipulated that he must be granted the rank of Captain, which modest demand was acceded to. Then followed a wholesale enlisting of thousands of repentant robbers. The horses stolen from the chief American geologist were among the recovered booty and were identified a few weeks later in the military barracks at Lo Chwan. Are robbers ex-soldiers? The converse is also true: soldiers are ex-robbers.

CHAPTER XI

A WEEK OF PANIC IN YENANFU

AT midday on Sunday, 26th March 1916, the city of Yenanfu was suddenly plunged into panic. Disjointed rumours quickly began to circulate. It transpired that a North Shensi Government employee had been suspected by the Sianfu authorities of connivance with bandits, and was proceeding under arrest to the capital. The party had reached a point six miles south of the town of Kanchuan when a band of bandits surprised them, obviously intending to rescue the prisoner. His military custodians (at least so they afterwards reported, and the story has not been contradicted), rather than lose their charge, shot him on the spot. There followed a fierce fight in which several soldiers were killed. The rest, finding themselves overpowered, retired to Kanchuan, where they were pursued by the robbers, who then commenced an attack on the town. As soon as the first tidings of this reached Yenanfu, military reinforcements were dispatched, but they proved impotent. Several soldiers were killed and the others escaped back to Yenanfu.

Their hasty return had to be accounted for in such a way as at least to " save their faces," and so the colonel, more skilled in the art of framing dispatches than in

suppressing brigandage, circulated a report that his soldiers had killed or scattered the robbers, removing all causes for fear. No one, however, was deceived, unless, indeed, he himself was, by foolishly supposing anyone believed his report. And the truth became quickly known by the arrival of refugees from the Kanchuan Yamen. The Yamen, the post office and several shops (though not the mission preaching hall) were burned. The entire population, including the magistrate, fled. The northward-bound postal courier, who happened to be there at the time, though unable to save his mail-bag, was ingenious in saving his life by making himself useful to the brigands by fetching and carrying. He witnessed the burning of two northern-bound and one southern-bound mail-bags, but by the time the third mail arrived from the south the robbers had gone, and he received it and brought it on to Yenanfu, together with his own graphic account of all that had happened.

The destruction of the mail is a new phase of these robbers' activities, and it is very serious. In this case it cut off all communication, official and otherwise, between the capital and the north of the province. It is more than probable that the proclamation informing the twenty northern counties of the cancellation of the monarchy and the resuscitation of the republic were in the destroyed mail-bags. In any case, many days after the fact was known by the arrival of papers by the Taiyuanfu route the Yamen was still without official information. In a sense, however, this may have been

A Chinese Wheelbarrow

The wheel comes up through centre of frame and on one side one or two passengers may sit, the other side being balanced by their luggage. The handles are wide apart. A broad strong strap fastened to the ends goes round the pusher's neck and shoulders.

a blessing in disguise, for, while the Government might bear with complacency of the killing and robbing of citizens, it could not lightly consent to the isolation of the North Shensi circuit.

As soon as news of what had occurred at Kanchuan began to filter through to Yenanfu, all was stir and excitement. The shops closed, the schools disbanded, and all occupations of a civilian kind were instantly stopped. Builders were summoned to completely block up the South Gate and to repair the city defences. An arrangement had been in vogue for many weeks by which each family sent one man to join the guard on the city wall once in ten days. The families were divided into fifty groups, of which five were on duty each night. Now all were called up. Those for whom there were neither guns nor swords armed themselves with sticks and stones. Of stones there is no lack in Yenanfu, for all walls are built of them, and great heaps of them mark the sites of former houses. Gangs of city urchins were set to carry or throw large quantities of these stones on to the city wall and arrange them in piles ready to throw at invaders should they come. The form for giving alarm agreed upon was the ringing of the big city bell, and in view of this we were asked to desist for a few days from ringing the church bell, for fear it should be mistaken for the sounding of an alarm.

The field headquarters of the National Oil Bureau in Yenanfu, and its staff, suggested that they and the missionaries should co-operate for mutual protection. The captain, who had been responsible for the bodyguard

of both the Chinese and foreigners engaged in the oil operations, proposed that if bandits attacked the city he would go out and interview their chief, explaining that his forty soldiers would concentrate on the protection of the mission premises, where the Oil Bureau staff would be gathered with the missionaries, and would not attack the robbers unless molested by them.

In addition to this, arrangements were made for giving hospitality and protection on the church premises to women (all men would be on duty). Then from the church bell tower, which is clearly seen from a considerable distance, and over the entrance of the mission hospital were displayed Red Cross flags, which would probably be respected, even by bandits.

Our plans being duly formulated, we could do little else than " wait and see," although after a few days we decided it would be better to sleep at nights and so be fresh in the event of an attack than to become worn out by constant watching when nothing was actually happening.

It seemed to us that whatever might be the subsequent danger, the first night would almost certainly pass without attack. For although we did not believe the military report about the scattering of the robbers, we did know that they had been exhausting their energies for two whole days, and it was very improbable that they would immediately cover the twenty-five miles to Yenanfu and start on a vastly more difficult task without some time for recuperation. It would therefore have been wiser if some at least of the prospective

defenders of Yenanfu had conserved their strength. But they were far too frightened for that, and almost the entire male population spent the night on the city walls.

On the following days, as was to be expected, the panic increased. Women in particular were almost driven to distraction. Many of those in the city were so afraid that they escaped to the villages, while many from the villages were so frightened that they fled to the city.

The colonel had for some weeks had in his custody three reputed robbers, and he thought it wise not to be further encumbered with them. He therefore ordered them to be led just outside the city gate and shot. It would have been an opportune moment for the bandits to arrive, as simply everybody's attention was for the time diverted from duty.

Opinions were divided as to the probable victory or defeat of the robbers if they came. With anything like a well-worked-out plan it ought to be simplicity itself to hold the city against two thousand attackers, for the approaches are dangerously exposed to commanding positions, and the robbers at most only numbered seven hundred. But there was the difficulty—although everybody's strength was being worn down by constant watching, there was no plan, no scheme. For instance, when I saw a youth whom I knew well starting off to his appointed place of watching I said to him: "You have neither gun nor sword, stick nor stone; what will you really do if an attack occurs? What is your

programme?" His reply was instinctive, and I don't think it could be better translated into English than by the slang word: "Skedaddle." Not having time to frame a high-sounding reply, he gave utterance to the simple truth—not only concerning himself, but also regarding the vast majority of his fellow city watchers.

During the hours of daylight the situation was often relieved to some extent, but with each nightfall a new phase was introduced. On the second evening it was reported that the spies of the brigands had approached as near as ten miles, and were seen signalling from a mountain-top; that their cavalry was not far behind, and their infantry, numbering seven hundred, were farther to the rear.

But it was well to take these reports with much reserve, for it is very questionable whether the spies sent out from the city ever went near enough to discover anything. There was one very amazing, and equally amusing, instance of this. The magistrate sent his Yamen runners to employ two men who would be willing to spend the night in spying. It seemed an easy enough way (provided it was not taken too seriously) of earning a few hundred cash, and two men were procured without difficulty. When receiving their instructions, it was explained to them that if they met mounted robbers it would be useless for them to attempt to reach the city with the news in time to give warning, so the best way would be to signal by lighting a fire on a hill-top. As the two men had no intention of doing more than spend a quiet night out, they appear

to have paid little or no attention to much of this advice. Or else it must have quickly escaped their memories, for after spending four or five hours by going a little distance southwards and back, and being unable to get into the city until daybreak, they decided to spend the remaining hours of dark in a temple about a hundred yards from the South Gate. But they found the temple door locked, and so there was nothing for it but to stay out in the cold. Whether it was just the normal thing to do, or whether the idea of lighting a fire had still lingered vaguely about their sleepy minds, it is hard to tell, but in any case, without the faintest idea that they were signalling, and with the one and only motive of warming themselves, they lit a fire! It was the very thing to alarm the city, and it did so very thoroughly.

On entering the city they were arrested, and the colonel was eager to have them summarily shot, whereupon the civil official urged that the case came under his jurisdiction. As the unsuccessful spies were natives of Yenanfu, the "gentry" in a body waited upon the official and begged that leniency might be shown, especially as the fault was rather one of dense stupidity than of wilfulness. But the magistrate was obdurate. Then a hundred representative citizens knelt before him, with the result that the sentence was reduced to a thrashing and a day on the streets wearing the *cangue*.

The mental condition of the people soon became such that the most innocent occurrences caused panic.

Nothing happened, or failed to happen, which might not be taken as provocation for added alarm.

On the fourth day the whole city was summoned to the walls with the cry: "Cavalry are arriving." Soldiers and militia hurriedly shouldered their weapons and rushed to the scene. Within ten minutes someone suggested that perhaps, after all, it was only a few villagers on horseback. In another five minutes it was known that the only real raw material of fact behind the scare was a man on a donkey coming towards the city!

But on the fifth day there was an adequate cause for excitement. In the morning the same announcement was made: "Cavalry have come." And indeed eleven men in soldiers' uniform were to be seen just outside the city walls. The military and police on the walls pointed their rifles and called to those outside to halt; but, having done so, proceeded to hobnob amiably. However much suspicion and malice there may have been in their hearts, there was certainly none on their tongues just then. Those without explained that their main company was encamped twenty miles to the south, but that on account of the looting of Kanchuan they were without food for man or beast. These eleven had therefore been sent on with silver to purchase supplies. But, although they said their main company was not coming, an hour had not passed before forty of their cavalry rode up. The police and people of Yenanfu immediately commented on this blatant inconsistency, and suggested opening fire on them at once. And then,

while they were still discussing the subject, about forty infantry came within sight. Who were they, and what was the purpose of their coming? No one knew. It is true they wore the uniform of the Shensi troops. But that proved nothing regarding their identity. The bandits, being mainly mutinied Shensi troops, also had these uniforms, and would naturally wear them to deceive people. Responsible people were on the horns of a dilemma. How could they dare to fire, when after all those outside might be Government troops come to save the city? Yet, if they admitted them, they might easily prove bandits and loot the city. Indeed what could be more likely than that they should make their presence within the walls of the city an occasion for the transition from soldiers to robbers?

At last, however, after much parleying, they were admitted, and the company who half-an-hour earlier were within an ace of being fired upon marched through the gates headed by their bands and banners, and welcomed (ostensibly) by the city authorities. It was understood, however, that after rest and refreshment they were to leave again, *en route* for Yenchang.

But the arrangement of admitting them was not supported by public opinion, and when it later became apparent that no preparations for departure were being made, the fears of the people increased with every hour. Most people believed that the city would be sacked before the night was through. And then something unexpectedly happened to falsify their fears: the vanguard of one thousand Government troops arrived, and

the situation was saved. They had been doing forced marches for days, and on this day had tramped fifty miles. Whether those admitted earlier in the day were really brigands or soldiers did not immediately transpire, but in any case they were ordered out at once, with the result that a sense of security pervaded the city.

The soldiers, whose timely arrival saved the city, left again early on Sunday morning to pursue the robbers, who were believed to be turning their attention towards Ichuan, a prosperous county town seventy miles south-east of Yenanfu. In the early afternoon, however, news reached Yenanfu that Ichuan had already been captured by the robbers, who were now hurrying toward Yenchang. Express messengers were sent to overtake the troops with a view to redirecting their course.

There seemed now no fear for Yenanfu. Its people, worn out by a week's watching (for all fifty groups had been on duty every day), settled themselves for a night of peaceful sleep. The arrangements that had been in operation before the panic—*i.e.* five groups on duty—were reverted to. Conditions became normal. For myself, I was absolutely certain that no attack would be made that night, and I retired to rest earlier than usual.

But at 11 P.M. the city was startled out of its slumbers by the ringing of the alarm bell. It was stated that brigands in overwhelming numbers were marching on the city. All men were hurriedly sent to the wall for the defence of the city. Captain Li, of the Oil Bureau, paid a hasty call to inform us that he with his men were

joining in the defence of the city, but that if the brigands obtained entrance he would retire to the mission premises and concentrate there. But the night wore wearily through, and still there was no attack. The alarm had, after all, been a false one. What could be the explanation? Several were put forth, but the one given me later by the commanding officer of the new troops (who, by the way, unlike so many one has met, is a young man, highly educated, thoroughly alert, keen and industrious) was that on hearing of the fall of Ichuan he decided to hasten back so as to block the pass to Yenanfu before resting, though this again meant a two days' march in one day. Between 9 P.M. and 10 P.M. scouts from Yenanfu came unexpectedly upon these troops, and on being challenged did not reply, whereupon the soldiers fired a few shots. The Yenanfu scouts, confident that they had encountered brigands, galloped back with the report that alarmed the city.

The troops returned the following morning, and thus finally dispelled all fears. But there has not been so extreme a panic in Yenanfu, nor has the alarm bell been sounded, since December, 1911, when the city as one man rose to wreak its vengeance on those who had then conducted the Reign of Terror.

NOTE.—In a letter dated 22nd May 1916, received after this book was in the printers' hands, the author says: "Alarm has followed alarm, and the outlook changes frequently. I have been in demand as go-between, and a few days ago, by holding up the attacking force while still thirty miles away, prevented a battle, and so saved the city. . . . The thing had to be done with great secrecy. . . . *Only* our premises are regarded by all as inviolable.

CHAPTER XII

THE HOSPITAL

JUST opposite to the chapel and actually adjoining a house prepared as a missionary's residence was situated the disused barracks of my former friend, Captain Ren. There were perplexing complications connected with the property. It did not, as one would suppose, belong to the Government, and neither had Captain Ren purchased it; and it had two owners, one of the Eastern section, another of the Western. But although Captain Ren had not bought it, he added extra buildings to it. Then at the revolution Captain Ren escaped, leaving debts, for which his share in the barracks was regarded as security.

Two years later the question of selling the property arose. But how could it be properly settled? Neither the Eastern nor the Western owners could sell, even if "two of them should agree," for there were Captain Ren's buildings and consequent claim. Captain Ren could not sell, for the simple reason that the original property was not his. Then we suggested giving a normal market price for the whole and meeting the claims locally, and paying Captain Ren his share by cheque in Sianfu. But the tradespeople objected that the security for further debts would thus disappear. It was simply

impossible to find a scheme that would please everybody. Meanwhile the property was deteriorating, to everybody's loss.

What was to be done? It was clearly to everyone's advantage to secure a good tenant who would take an interest in the fabric. In this respect the Baptist mission is unrivalled, and so just at the time when the hopes of years were about to be realised by the arrival of Dr and Mrs Scollay, these spacious premises came into our hands for the princely rental of three pounds per annum.

The buildings were situated around three courtyards, which were divided into women's, men's and stables, and permitted of adaptation without structural alteration for use as large waiting-room, dispensary, consulting office, operating-room and two large oblong wards, one for women and one for men, each forty by twenty feet, and capable of accommodating fourteen patients. This in addition to smaller rooms for the staff. It is true that from a modern hygienic point of view "hospital" is a courtesy title for the ex-barracks, yet it speedily lived up to the dictionary definition—viz. "an institution for the treatment of the sick and the injured." And we certainly might have gone further and fared worse.

In order to justify the necessary outlay for renovation a lease for five years was granted, which is an ample breathing-space during which to evolve permanent plans.

Dr and Mrs Scollay arrived in August, 1914. Before

leaving Sianfu for Yenanfu Dr Scollay, who is M.B., Ch.B. of St Andrew's University, had included amongst his numerous patients the then provincial governor, General Chang Fen Hwei, one of the outstanding figures of the Chinese revolution. Dr Scollay was called in at a time when an almost successful attempt had been made on the general's life by a would-be assassin. And Mrs Scollay, as Nurse Mackey Watt, had done a vast amount of work for wounded soldiers during the first three months of the revolution.

Then was started the first systematic and permanent medical work ever done in North Shensi; for Dr Robertson's visit had only lasted a brief six weeks. The immediate relief to ourselves was great, as we were released from the false position of being appealed to for what we could not give, and yet could not refuse without acute sympathetic suffering.

It is not our purpose to give a detailed diary of the doctor's daily work, but rather to mention a few more or less typical cases. One of the early patients was the soldier, already mentioned, into whose brain the Roman Catholic bishop had fired a bullet. "Such a thing had never entered his head before," but it was still more surprising that not only did death not immediately ensue, but that the soldier did not seem very much worse. After a preliminary operation Dr Scollay came to the conclusion that the risks of extracting the bullet were too great to be attempted. It might stay in the same position and cause comparatively little discomfort; it might even gradually work itself out by the same way

that it entered ; or it might, by moving slightly, cause instantaneous death. The man did not seem by any means the ruffian one might have supposed. During his stay of several weeks in the hospital he was docile and well behaved. When his company was drafted elsewhere he joined it, and we heard no more of him.

It would not be very generous to make sectarian capital out of this case, but both the soldier himself and innumerable other people must have noticed the strange fact that he was nearly killed by the Roman Catholic, and cared for by the Protestant doctor.

During the winter of 1914–1915 soldier patients were very numerous. In the Chinese army corporal punishment of extreme severity is adopted, and the colonel of that particular company was an unusually strict disciplinarian. The routine came to be carried out with mechanical regularity. A soldier would be discovered breaking the rules ; he would be sentenced to a thousand or more strokes with the bamboo ; after these had been duly administered a few of his companions would place him on a door (for a stretcher) and carry him to the hospital, where after some weeks of rest and treatment he would obtain considerable relief. In one extreme case a soldier patient had been beaten incessantly for two hours, a relay of beaters being arranged when the first was tired. He was probably disabled for life. In due course the official would call and express his thanks for the amount of " heart spent " on his soldier.

I once ventured the opinion that the whole process

involved a great loss of time and labour by several people—the officer, the beaters, the stretcher-bearers and the hospital staff. Could not the whole thing be dispensed with to everyone's advantage? The objection raised was that that would mean the sacrifice of the moral effect!

But in addition to flogging there are also other certain refinements of corporal punishment. One of these is prodding with a spear. This produces wounds which often have serious results. I once asked a victim of this delicate discipline why he had been subjected to it. "Because I frequently disobey my colonel's regulations," he replied. "But why not obey, and so avoid this treatment?" I suggested. "Because my lucky star is unpropitious, leaving me no alternative," he explained. "But surely the question of obeying or disobeying is one for you personally to decide independently of your lucky star," I urged. "I am quite helpless in the matter; I think I do obey, but my colonel says I disobey, and if he who is a big man while I am only a little one says so, it must be true," was all the elucidation obtainable from this store. But in reality he was not quite so innocent and simple as he seemed. Let us hope the moral effect enjoyed was ample compensation for the suffering endured.

Another interesting patient was the chief of the Fu Chow police force. He has already been referred to in the chapter on "Marauders and Mutineers." It would be no exaggeration to describe him as the hero of the Fu Chow episode. But as irony would have it, one day

when testing a new revolver for a new raid on the robbers, it discharged by accident, fracturing the bones of his foot. He had not failed to notice how his previous residence in Fu Chow had been spared at the last moment, because it was discovered that it belonged to the Church, so he hired bearers to carry him to the Yenanfu headquarters. While at the hospital he showed great impatience to be at the robbers again. He asked that his bandages might be changed twice as often as had been arranged, in order that (so he thought) his foot could be well in half the time. This is somewhat characteristic of Chinese patients. They are inclined to omit from their calculations the important element of time. Sometimes when given a course of medicine they have been known to take the whole in one dose in order to speed up the cure! This in spite of the fact that the Chinese are not, on the whole, a nation of hustlers.

Now it might be legitimately urged that altogether apart from any preaching propaganda this medical work *is* missionary work. For is not the alleviation of suffering and the healing of disease a sufficient end in itself? Is not practice the best form of preaching? But the simple fact is that it does not stop there. The missionary is not lost in the medical, as one or two extracts from Dr Scollay's diary will show:

"One man who came in practically blind, and went out able to see, deplored the fact that, being illiterate, he could not read, but he took his copy of the Gospel in the hope that someone would be good enough to

read it to him. In this way not only he, but his reader, would hear the good news. . . ."

"In the morning of out-patient day no regular services could be held, as the patients came straggling in and had to be seen as they came. Every opportunity has been taken, however, to tell the Gospel message to them individually. A regular service has been held six nights a week, and the in-patients have also been given opportunity to hear the Word as they lay in their beds."

The reader is already aware that the area administered by the Yenanfu mission station is extensive, and it has been Dr and Mrs Scollay's purpose, as far as duties at the main base have permitted, to visit the outposts. Of their three weeks' work in Lo Chwan, three days' journey south of Yenanfu, Dr Scollay writes: "We were the first medicals to spend so many days in the town, and we found that patients were very numerous. After the people knew we had arrived the preaching hall was filled every day. After the preaching we saw the patients, and before we left our whole stock of medicines was used up. The patients seemed very grateful. At first we were disappointed that no women came, but after the first day or two there were plenty of them. We were also asked to go to the houses to see patients, and in this way had an opportunity to see about a score of families."

It will be easily understood that the consistent financial anxiety experienced in a work of this kind was greatly accentuated by the World War. But before

Photo by *A. D. Hill, Esq.*

BAPTIST CHAPEL, YENANFU

The belfry was presented by the American explorers.

BUDDHIST HADES

Sent back for a re-incarnation.

the Yenanfu medical work was a year old it was considerably relieved in an interesting way. It has already been shown that between the missionaries and the medical oil experts and workers there existed genuine friendliness. This resulted in an arrangement involving mutual advantage. In return for medical attention to the American staff, the company subsidised the hospital to an appreciable extent. Of course without this agreement there would have been no question of declining medical assistance, but in that case the hospital would not have been able to estimate on the extent of the income from that source.

It has already been made clear that our purpose in this chapter is to give an idea of the quality rather than the quantity of medical work done. But it is not without interest to record that during the first sixteen months the number of out-patients was 3185; the in-patients numbered 52, while there were 175 operations and 213 visits to homes.

And now in Yenanfu the full missionary programme is carried out: "Preach, Teach, Heal."

CHAPTER XIII

THE BUILDING OF A CHURCH

TO obtain property in China one has to make haste slowly. There is no such thing as a market value for a house or piece of land; but there is a very vital distinction in the Chinese mind between A wishing to buy a certain house and B wishing to sell. Supposing that it originally cost £100, if A wishes to procure it, he will almost certainly have to pay £300, probably much more, especially if it adjoins his own; whereas if B wishes to sell it, he will regard himself as fortunate if he obtains £70. It thus becomes almost a *sine qua non* of purchasing property to wait until the owner approaches you; never make the first approach yourself. Be passive if you are a missionary; you can only afford to be active if you are a millionaire.

And there are other difficulties as well. You, the purchaser, are an individual, whereas the owner is infinitely more complex—viz. a family. A "family" in China means an intricate and labyrinthine institution, unknown in the West. Just when you are getting on nicely with the transaction, you may find to your dismay that the other high contracting party has a brother or, worse still, an uncle or nephew. And many arguments of a metallic character are necessary before a unanimous vote is secured. Thus to obtain sufficient

property, and, still more, to have it contiguous, is a task requiring much time and more patience.

The contiguity of the Baptist Missionary Society property in Yenanfu was broken by a piece of vacant ground which, for some scores of years at least, had been used as the public dust-heap. It was growing higher and higher, and in July, 1914, was already fifteen feet above its natural height. Fortunately it was not more than two plots, and, better still, one of the owners wished to sell. In due time, therefore, one section of the desired land (about one-fifth of the whole) became ours for £4, 10s. But the larger section belonged to no one; not even to a "family." It had once been the site of a temple, but there were no trustees remaining. All one could say regarding its ownership was that now it belonged to the "public," a term even vaguer than "family." There were days when the "public" might well have meant the magistrate for the time being. But is not China now a republic, and have not the people a share in the country? Failing the magistrate, the local "gentry" should be the natural executive of the public. But no one seemed able to recall an instance in which the "gentry" had been known to agree. Happily (for us!) just at the time when we were really needing the land, not only to connect our other institutions, but also as a site for our long-desired chapel, a part of the north of the city wall fell down. Then something simply had to be done, and yet there were no funds. The official might procrastinate, for a magistrate's term is short, but the gentry belong to the locality,

and they had no alternative but to act. Their dilemma became our opportunity, for at this juncture their thoughts turned in the direction of the land that had no owner, and for the reasonable sum of £25 we purchased the plot.

A notice was at once put up stating our intention of erecting a large chapel and inviting public subscriptions. The purpose of this was not so much to obtain funds from those outside the Church, as to make our intention widely known, and to emphasise the fact that a large section of the cost of the new chapel was expected from Chinese sources.

As in the case of the Temple of old, the building required a good deal of preparation of material. But the necessary work had been cautiously proceeding for many months. Considerably before the rush of building materials of all kinds to Yenchang, and the consequent rise in price began, the big timbers, as well as sufficient bricks and tiles, had all been obtained—and obtained cheaply.

Had this not been so, apart from greatly increased expenditure, the building season of the year, which only extends from March to October, on account of the extreme cold of other months, would have passed before we were fully prepared.

As with our task of building the Church Spiritual, so with that of erecting the Church Material, before actual building operations could commence the task of clearing the site had to be undertaken. In both cases the accumulation of the past had to be disposed of.

In Yenanfu there were four large wheelbarrows, and for the princely sum of sixteen cash (rather less than a halfpenny) per barrow-load, these were engaged to convey surplus earth from the site to the river, about two hundred and fifty yards away. Coal is usually carried to Yenanfu in two big baskets on donkey-back, and all the available coal-carriers entered the service at one farthing per donkey-load.

The water supply of Yenanfu is the river, and is carried by men in two buckets, one on each end of a pole, and so during the slack hours the water-carriers changed their buckets for baskets and earned one-eighth of a penny per load. Some chair-bearers who had happened to be in the city at the time entered this regiment. And then there were numberless city urchins eager to earn a loaf of bread, and so in twos they shouldered a pole with one basket dangling from it, and each journey brought one-sixteenth of a penny to the partners, and so for every four journeys each boy obtained the price of a loaf (about the size and shape of a tennis ball). Many feet made light work, and it was not many days before the mountain was removed and cast into the depths of the river.

Before the task was completed it transpired—and here one might continue the parable of the Church Material and Spiritual—that all was not refuse, for when we got deep enough we discovered some hundreds of feet of flagstones, indispensable for foundations, as well as bricks and smaller stones.

For the new building it might, from many points of

view, have seemed desirable to obtain the principal workmen from some larger centre than Yenanfu—men with earlier experience of such kind of work. But to do so would have involved surrender of one of our main purposes—to make the building really belong to the neighbourhood, to give as many local people as possible the feeling that they had had a share in its erection. And this was rendered the more possible since the essential structure was to be in Chinese style. Yenanfu contains many a magnificent temple from which a Western builder might probably take some hints. To erect a large oblong building such as the late "J. B.," one of the prophets of our generation, advocated in the article [1] he wrote a few hours before he died, is simple work for the Chinese builder; whereas for the required striking external appearance, his ingenuity, aided by pictures of Western churches and cathedrals, can devise a new combination of available materials. Once overcome his native conservatism sufficiently to entice him to use on the floor what he has hitherto only used on the ceiling, and vice versa, and there is hardly any limit to possibilities! An entirely new synthesis is simply wonderful, and in appearance our new building may justly claim to be attractive. Our American friends have not hesitated to compare it with an English cathedral! And indeed there is something fitting in this. The Roman Catholic Church has recently made a new Episcopal see of North Shensi, and appointed the bishop to live in Yenanfu. If they have

[1] "Religion and Buildings," *Christian World*.

a bishop without a cathedral, there is surely no reason why we should not have a cathedral without a bishop. Indeed the ecclesiastical function of our new building is exactly that of a cathedral, for the smaller churches of the whole area, stretching several days' journey in all directions, will look at it as their centre, just as in secular affairs the whole of North Shensi has from time immemorial looked to Yenanfu as its metropolis.

But perhaps we are giving too much space to the merely material side of this matter. For the *Church*, to the building of which we are devoting this chapter, is essentially a *Community*, and only secondarily a *Chapel*. Such secular things as bricks and mortar are only valuable, from our point of view, in so far as they are the outward, visible sign of sacred facts.

What is the inner meaning of the spacious and striking structure which now stands near the centre of the city of Yenanfu ?

Among other things it means that *we needed it*. The house which four years earlier was adapted for use as a chapel by the removal of all interior partitions, and accommodated about one hundred and fifty persons, became barely large enough for our regular Sunday congregations, and quite insufficient for central gatherings of the whole North Shensi Church. The actual progress attained, to say nothing of our faith for the future, necessitated larger premises : the Church required a chapel.

But more than this, the Church was *prepared to help* towards procuring one. The chapel was the achievement

of a long-cherished purpose, for which many sacrifices had been made. It was not erected because of any irresponsible desire to assemble in a big and beautiful building, leaving the financial burden for the Home Society to bear. A good deal has been heard in certain quarters about the Independent Chinese Church, and indeed towards this goal every foreign missionary is working; for one of his ideals is to make himself unnecessary. He must decrease, whilst the Chinese leader must increase. But sometimes, when the claim is prematurely made, it amounts to this: Let the Foreign Society provide the funds, while the Chinese officers administer them! Happily for us in Yenanfu, we have far less *talk* about independence than in most places, and at the same time a good deal more of the actual *reality*. For instance, our chapel cost two and a half millions (of cash!) to build, but it was not started until half-a-million had been raised by the local church, and when it was opened six hundred and seventy thousand cash had been realised locally; and the end is not yet. The Arthington grant for new work is not being used as a substitute for, but as a stimulant to, Chinese effort; and although we have had out-stations with no baptized Church members, we have had none without contributors.

Some of these contributions are really sacred, expressing devotion to the point of sacrifice. "One star differeth from another in glory," and the instance I now mention is admittedly not typical, but one man, Mr Ch'ü, whose character is sketched in Book III., Chapter III.,

and whose salary only equals nine pounds per annum, gave two pounds in the autumn, following one pound in the spring of the year. And these amounts have been preceded by slightly lesser annual contributions for some years.

The dedicatory and opening service marked a red-letter day from any point of view. The Chinese equivalent to the "mayor and corporation" is the "county magistrate and gentry," and these attended in state. The three Government schools, each headed by band and banners, marched in procession. Soldiers and police, armed and in uniform, and also the City Merchants' Guild, came in a body. These, with members and associates from far and near, left little room for the general public, and the four hundred and fifty allotted seats were not half sufficient for those who attempted to attend the inaugural service.

Of proper pews we had very few indeed. The Society funds were not available, and the Chinese Church Fund was completely spent. And so chairs and forms were borrowed wholesale. This defect has, however, since been fully remedied. In return for imagined kindnesses, as well as to express interest in missionary work, various American friends have at different times presented pews, so that now the church furniture (including a carved communion chair and table) is complete. It is also more than probable that before these lines appear in print an organ will be installed from funds contributed by American friends.

To return to our account of the opening service,

every available space was crowded. The whole city was *en fête*, and although during the thousands of years of Yenanfu history it must have had very many festive days, it is hardly too much to claim that 1st November 1914 can be "counted in their number."

Since then, of course, the congregations have been much smaller than on the opening day, but they have been consistently more than could have been crowded into the earlier chapel, and the future is ours.

The nineteen baptisms that took place during the opening services brought the church membership up to ninety-nine. In spite of the coincidence of the number, however, they cannot be described as "just persons who need no repentance." They have very many remaining imperfections, but they have been attracted by Christ, and have promised to serve Him even at cost.

We are grateful for the new and attractive chapel; but much more so for the Church of which it is the home.

> "And as the years roll over
> And strong affections twine,
> And tender memories gather
> About this sacred shrine,
> May this, its chief distinction,
> Its glory ever be,
> That multitudes within it
> Have found their way to Thee."[11]

"Blessed be Thy Name, O Lord God, for that it hath pleased Thee to have Thy habitation among the sons of men, and to dwell in the midst of the assembly of the saints upon the earth. Grant, we beseech Thee, that

in this place now set apart to Thy service, Thy Holy Name may be worshipped in truth and purity through all generations. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

But, although at the opening services we were filled with gratitude for the new chapel, we were very conscious, as indeed we had been throughout the whole of the building operations, of two important things that were lacking—viz. a bell and a belfry. For in North Shensi a church bell is not a superfluous luxury. It is not required to perpetuate a tradition, or to satisfy a sentiment. It is a real and practical necessity. Without it people have no means of knowing when to come to church.

It is quite useless to publish the hour of the services. How is the ordinary inhabitant of Yenanfu to know when it is 7 or 11 A.M. or 3 or 8 P.M.? Regarding time he has at best a "general idea." It is perhaps one of the curses of China that there is in the language a much-used phrase meaning "not far out." It indicates lack of precision or exactitude. The Englishman's announcement of "11 o'clock sharp" means to the North Shensi mind anything between 9 A.M. and 2 P.M.

It may be inquired: "Are there no watches in Yenanfu?" to which the reply is: "Unfortunately, there are a few." But the possession of a watch begets pride, a feeling of exactitude with no corresponding reality. For the watches that reach Yenanfu are of a very inferior quality; they keep anything but correct time, and there is no "Big Ben" near by with which

to compare them. And so, from the point of punctuality, the last state of those who now have watches is worse than the first.

It might surprise (and amuse!) people at home to know what great variety of opinion there frequently is, even among "foreigners," in Shensi regarding the "right time." All of them, of course, have exemplary watches, and, better still, they frequently correct them by "sun-time." But the only way to make them agree is to take the average! What then can you expect from cheap Chinese and Japanese watches such as are sold to the Chinese here? They certainly leave unsolved the original problem: How is it possible for the congregation to come punctually to church? The ringing of a church bell is the only satisfactory method. With us, it has been usual to have three tollings of the bell for each service: the first—a series of single strokes—an hour before worship time; the second—a series of double strokes—half-an-hour later; and the third—a series of triple strokes—is the signal for the opening of the service.

In Yenanfu a bell is not a mere Sunday requirement, for the week-day engagements include an early Church service every morning, three meetings on Wednesdays, and two on Fridays. One has frequently felt that if the three tollings of the church bell for each of these services could be clearly heard all over the city and beyond, the whole population would have repeated reminders of the presence and alertness of the Christian Church and its call to things spiritual.

But no suitable bell was available. Hitherto, as has been recorded, we have used a converted Buddhist bell from a ruined temple; but we have had no means of erecting it to a sufficient height, neither has it been loud-sounding enough to be heard beyond a very limited radius.

What was necessary? It is just the old story—funds. The local Chinese church continues, at considerable sacrifice, to raise finance. But its previous accumulation was exhausted by its share of the Church Building Fund; and its future contributions, for some time to come, are mortgaged for church building at an outstation. There were therefore no Chinese funds available, and it was not the time to expect extra grants from home. The prospects of procuring a really satisfactory church bell seemed remote.

But could any other source be tapped? Recently, when the American geologists and topographers gathered from their field work in scattered outposts to Yenanfu for an "office season," one of them asked me if there was any special object towards which a gift of five pounds could be used. I quickly replied: "For the starting of a Church Bell and Belfry Fund." The idea caught on. The chief geologist, after the very bell we desired had been discovered in an American catalogue, wrote a cheque for the exact amount. The chief of the engineering department said: "I'll have it brought in from the rail-head freight free." There then remained (1) freight from America to Tientsin; (2) then from Tientsin to the rail-head; (3) the belfry

to be provided for. A subscription list was passed round the dinner-table at the camp, and it soon became evident that neither the Home Society nor the Chinese Church need have any further financial anxiety in this connection. The oil experts, who had already provided most of the church pews, gave sufficient to buy the bell and build the belfry.

The chapel, as it stood, permitted of the addition of a belfry. It was merely necessary to continue the structure of one of the corners for an extra twenty feet. The new erection can now be seen from a considerable distance, for, with the solitary exception of the city drum tower, it is the highest building in the city of Yenanfu. And on both Sundays and weekdays, above the confused noises of the city, the bell with its call to worship can be clearly heard. The preacher's propaganda is greatly facilitated by the buying of a bell and the building of a belfry.

CONCLUSION

THE foregoing sketches do not claim to be in any sense an exhaustive treatment of the political and religious history of Yenanfu. They may, however, give some idea of the problems and prospects pertaining to the Christian occupation of this ancient area, so late in its history.

The question not unnaturally arises as to the relative influence of our movement, to the numberless others that have preceded it, during the four thousand years we have so rapidly reviewed.

What will posterity know of us? Will coming generations have any means of discovering that we have been here? We shall certainly leave no such monument as the Cave of Ten Thousand Buddhas. For our residences and other buildings are just Chinese houses, purchased from their previous occupants, cleaned and ventilated.

Will the Yamen records make any note of our propaganda, so that if they are deciphered with sufficient diligence some information about our mission may be obtained?

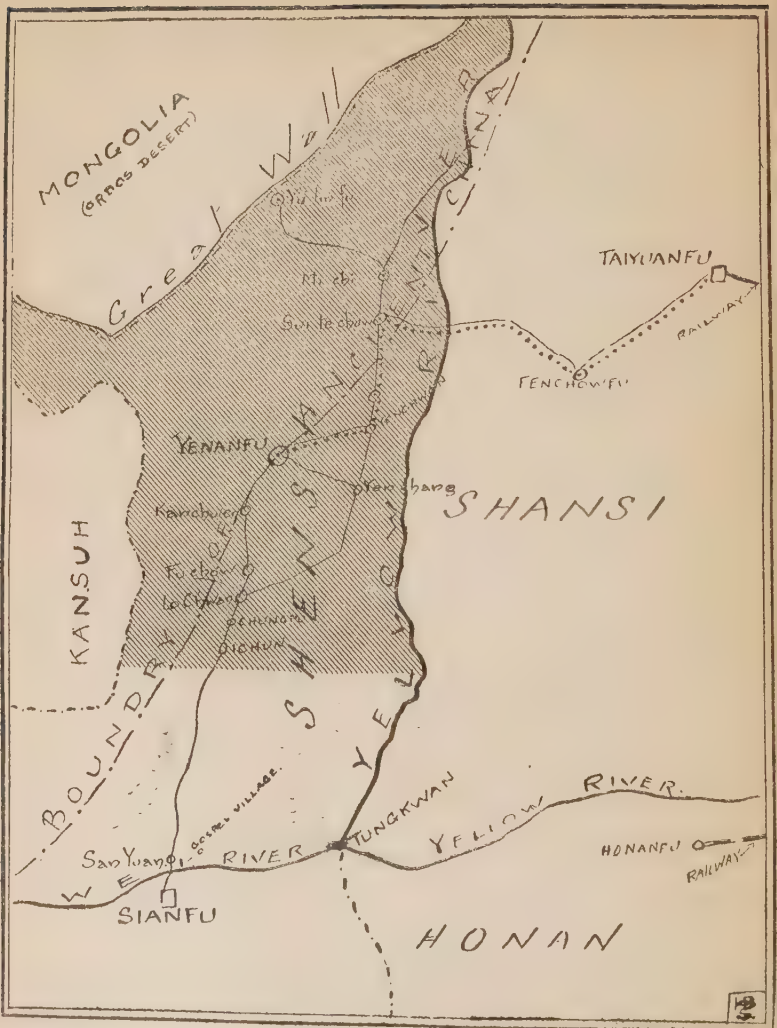
Or will our message introduce the leaven that shall leaven the whole lump? Is the Society we have founded the very Church of the living God that shall stand and grow in spite of the rise and fall of nations? It has

already stood one shock, and is firmer on that account.

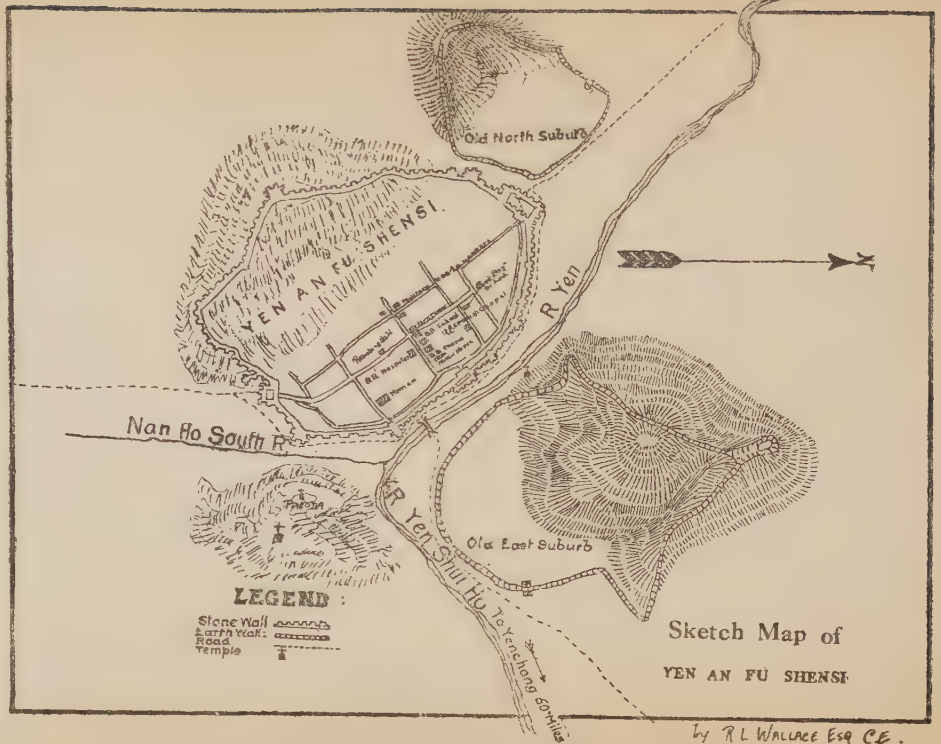
After all, is not the whole of this story, including, as it does, the conflict with the Huns, the coming of Buddhism, the rebellion of Mohammedans and Taipings, the distress of famines and floods, and the terror of the recent revolution, all epitomised in the Book of Kings ?

"And, behold, . . . a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; . . . and after the wind an earthquake; . . . and after the earthquake a fire; . . . and after the fire a still small voice," quiet and unassuming, but of God. May we not claim that thus, late in its day, we have brought to Yenanfu the Word which shall yet fulfil the hitherto unrealised prophecy contained in its name—Permanent Peace Prefecture.

MAPS



SKETCH MAP OF THE PROVINCES OF SHENSI & SHANSI, SHOWING ALL THE PLACES MENTIONED IN THE NARRATIVE. THE SHADED PORTION IS NORTH SHENSI, ALL OF WHICH HAS AT TIMES BEEN INCLUDED IN YENANFU PREFECTURE



SKETCH MAP OF YENANFU

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